One of the major events in the history of Ancient India was the advent of Buddhism in the Sixth century B. C. According to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, "Buddhism was Great Revolution", and Buddhism declined in India as result of "Counter –Revolution" initiated by the Brahmins. In order to elaborate this thesis, Dr. Ambedkar had planned to write a comprehensive work containing as many as forty chapters. Unfortunately, he could not complete the proposed work due to other compelling pre-occupations. However, some idea of what he had in mind for presentation in that work can be had from his other writings on Buddhism. This book planned and edited by D.C. Ahir, a reputed scholar of Buddhism and Ambedkarism, presents for the first time, a complete story of "Buddhist Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ancient India", as viewed by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

D.C. Ahir (born 1928, Punjab) is a reputed scholar of Buddhism and Ambedkarism. He retired as Director to the Government of India in February 1986. He has published more than forty books on Buddhism. He has also published a number of articles in various Buddhist journals, and presented papers in National and International Buddhist Conferences/Seminars.

In appreciation of his noble and notable contribution to the Buddhist literature as a distinguished Scholar and Author, the Maha Bodhi Society of India, Sarnath, conferred on him on 30 November 2001, the Honorary Title of BAUDDHA SAHITYA SHIROMANI. Similarly, the Ministry of Buddha Sasana, Government of Sri Lanka, Colombo, honoured him with the Title of BUDDHA SASANA JYOTI on 19 January 2003.

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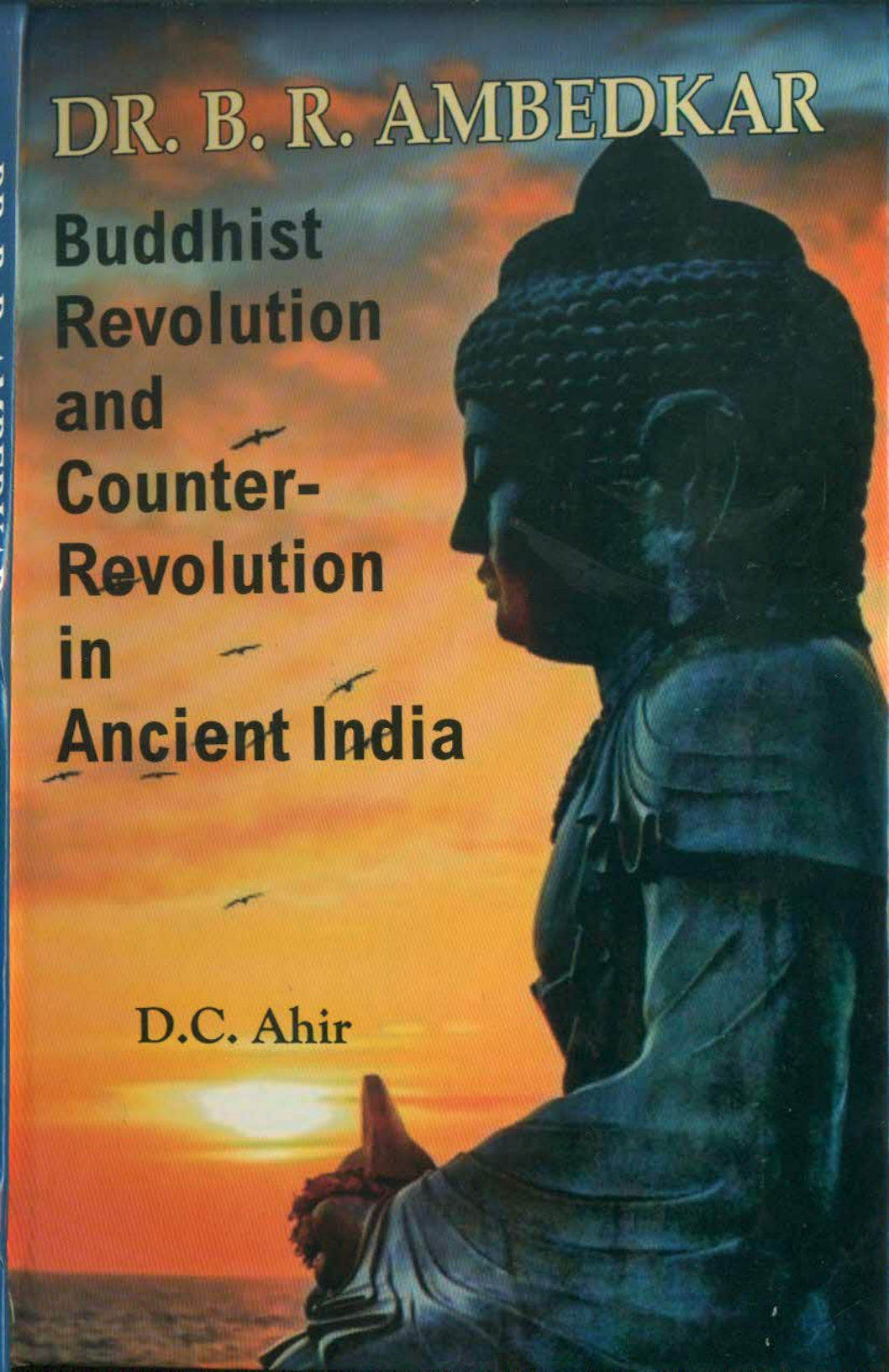

D.C. Ahir

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BUDDHIST REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION IN ANCIENT INDIA

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Dr. B.R. AMBEDKAR (14 April 1891—6 December 1956), well-known as the Saviour of the downtrodden of India and the Chief Architect of the Indian Constituion,was also one of the greatest scholars of his time. He had a knack for research, and whatever subject he touched upon he acquitted himself extremely well. His writings cover diverse subjects of human interest, such as, administration, anthropology, economics, finance, history, politics, religion and sociology. During his life-time, he had published in English over twenty books and pamphlets. He had also left behind a number of unpublished books which he had started writing but could not complete them for paucity of time.

The unpublished writings of Dr. Ambedkar have since been published by the Government of Maharashtra, Education Department, as volumes 3, 4 and 5 in the series "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches".

One of the major events in the history of India was the advent of Buddhism in the sixth century B.C. According to Dr. Ambedkar, "Buddhism was a Great Religious, Social and Political Revolution", and Buddhism declined in India as a result of Counter-Revolution initiated by the Brahmins. In order to elaborate this thesis, he had planned to write a treatise entitled "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ancient India". Unfortunately, however, he could not complete this work due to other compelling pre-occupations with social and political affairs.

As per the Table of Contents prepared by Dr. Ambedkar, he had divided the proposed work into seven books as follows:

Book I The Age of Racial Conflict

Book II The Conflict over Inequality

Book III How Conflict led to Revolution

Book IV Results of Revolution

Book V The Birth of Counter-Revolution

Book VI Results of Counter-Revolution

Book VII The Present Age is the Age of Counter-Revolution.

These seven books were planned to be further divided into approximately forty chapters. Of these, only thirteen chapters have come to light. These are: 1. Ancient India on Exhumation. 2. The Ancient Regime—The State of the Aryan Society. 3. A Sunken Priesthood. 4. Reformers and Their Fate. 5. The Decline and Fall of Buddhism. 6. The Literature of Brahmanism. 7. The Triumph of Brahmanism. 8. The Morals of the House. 9. The Bhagwat Gita: Philosophic Defence of Counter-Revolution. 10. Analysis of Virat Parva and Udyoga Parva (of Mahabharata). 11. Brahmins Versus Kshatriyas. 12. Shudras and the Counter-Revolution. 13. The Woman and the Counter-Revolution. Thus, Dr. Ambedkar was able to write only about one-third of the proposed work on Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ancient India. However, some idea of what Dr. Ambedkar had in mind for presentation in the proposed work can be had from some of his other writings. In particular, his monumental work 'The Buddha and His Dhamma' (1957), 'The Untouchables' (1948), and the two articles—'The Buddha and the Future of His Religion' and 'The Rise and Fall of the Hindu Woman (Who Was Responsible For It?' published in the Maha Bodhi Journal in 1950 and 1952 respectively have been found to contain some material relevant to the theme "Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ancient India".

Based on all the relevant material available in the writings of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, I have endeavoured to reconstruct a somewhat cohesive story of the Buddhist Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ancient India. Out of the 13 chapters published in Volume 3 of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, only chapters 1, 3, 4 (partly), 5, 6 (partly), 7 and 9 have been incorporated in this improvised work. Of the remaining, chapters 8, 11, 12 and 13 are more or less covered by chapter 7 while chapters 3 and 10 are not strictly relevant for our purpose here. The material derived from Volume 3 (125 pages out of 287 pages) has been supplemented by an almost equal number of pages from the other writings of Dr. Ambedkar.

Besides an introduction, this work has been divided into eleven chapters. Dr. Ambedkar's article "The Rise and Fall of

the Hindu Woman (Who Was Responsible For It?)" has been given as an appendix. The original sources of each chapter have been given in the footnotes.

I am indebted to the Government of Maharashtra (Education Department), Bombay; the People's Education Society, Bombay; and the Maha Bodhi Society of India, Calcutta, the original copyright holders of Dr. Ambedkar's writings presented in this book.

Vijaya Dashami,
3 October, 1995

D. C. Ahir

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INTRODUCTION*

"I am not satisfied with the way in which the history of India is written. For too much emphasis is laid on the Muslim conquest of India. Reels and reels have been written to show how wave after wave of Muslim invasions came down like avalanche and enveloped the people and overthrew their rulers. The whole history of India is made to appear as though the only important thing in it is a catalogue of Muslim invasions. But even from this narrow point of view it is clear that the Muslim invasions are not the only invasions worth study. There have been other invasions equally important if not of greater importance. If Hindu India was invaded by the Muslim invaders so was Buddhist India invaded by Brahmanic invaders. The Muslim invasions of Hindu India and the Brahmanic invasions of Buddhist India have many similarities. The Musalman invaders of Hindu India fought among themselves for their dynastic ambitions. The Arabs, Turks, Mongols and Afghans fought for supremacy among themselves. But they had one thing in common—namely the mission to destroy idolatry. Similarly the Brahmanic invaders of Buddhist India fought among themselves for their dynastic ambitions. The Sungas, Kanvas and the Andhras fought for supremacy among themselves. But they, like Muslim invaders of Hindu India, had one object in common, that was to destroy Buddhism and the Buddhist Empire of the Mauryas. Surely if Muslim invasions of Hindu India are worthy of study at the hands of the historians, the invasions of Buddhist India by Brahmanic invaders are equally deserving of study. The ways and methods employed by the Brahmanic invaders of Buddhist India to suppress Buddhism were not less violent and less virulent than the ways and means adopted by Muslim invaders to suppress Hinduism. From the point of view of the permanent effect on the social and spiritual life of the people, the Brahmanic invasions of Buddhist India have been so profound in their effect that compared to them, the effects of Muslim invasions

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* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 273-275.

on Hindu India have been really superficial and ephemeral. The Muslim invaders destroyed only the outward symbols of Hindu religion such as temples and Maths etc. They did not extirpate Hinduism nor did they cause any subversion of the principles or doctrines which governed the spiritual life of the people. The effects of the Brahmanic invasions were a thorough-going change in the principles which Buddhism had preached for a century as true and eternal principles of spiritual life and which had been accepted and followed by the masses as the way of life. To alter the metaphor the Muslim invaders only stirred the waters in the bath and that too only for a while. Thereafter they got tired of stirring and left the waters with the sediments to settle. They never threw the baby—if one can speak of the principles of Hinduism as a baby—out of the bath. Brahmanism in its conflict with Buddhism made a clean sweep. It emptied the bath with the Buddhist Baby in it and filled the bath with its own waters and placed in it its own baby. Brahmanism did not care to stop how filthy and dirty was its water as compared with the clean and fragrant water which flowed from the noble source of Buddhism. Brahmanism did not care to stop how hideous and ugly was its own baby as compared with the Buddhist baby. Brahmanism acquired by its invasions political power to annihilate Buddhism and it did annihilate Buddhism. Islam did not supplant Hinduism. Islam never made a thorough job of its mission. Brahmanism did. It drove out Buddhism as a religion and occupied its place.

These facts show that Brahmanic invasions of Buddhist India have a far greater significance to the Historian of India than the Muslim invasions of Hindu India can be said to have produced. Yet very little space is devoted by historians to the vicissitudes which befell Buddhist India built up by the Mauryas and even where that is done they have not cared to deal in a pointed manner with questions that quite naturally arise: questions such as, who were the Sungas, Kanvas and Andhras; why did they destroy the Buddhist India which was built up by the Mauryas, nor has any attempt been made to study the changes that Brahmanism after its triumph over Buddhism brought about in the political and social structure.

Failure to appreciate this aspect of India's history is due to the prevalence of some very wrong notions. It has been

commonly supposed that the culture of India has been one and the same all throughout history; that Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism are simply different phases and that there has never been any fundamental antagonism between them. Secondly it has been assumed that whatever conflicts have taken place in Indian politics were purely political and dynastic and that they had no social and spiritual significance. It is because of these wrong notions that Indian history has become a purely mechanical thing, a record of one dynasty succeeding another and one ruler succeeding another ruler. A corrective to such an attitude and to such a method of writing history lies in recognition of two facts which are indisputable.

In the first place it must be recognized that there has never been such as a common Indian culture, that historically there have been three Indias, Brahmanic India, Buddhist India and Hindu India, each with its own culture. Secondly it must be recognized that the history of India before the Muslim invasions is the history of a mortal conflict between Brahmanism and Buddhism. Any one who does not recognize these two facts will never be able to write a true history of India, a history which will disclose the meaning and purposes running through it. It is a corrective to Indian history written as it is and to disclose the meaning and purposes running through it that I was obliged to re-cast the history of the Brahmanic invasions of Buddhist India and the political triumph of Brahmanism over Buddhism.

B.R. Ambedkar

1

ANCIENT INDIA ON EXHUMATION*

Much of the ancient history of India is no history at all. Not that ancient India has no history. It has plenty of it. But it has lost its character. It has been made mythology to amuse women and children. This seems to have been done deliberately by the Brahminical writers. Take the word *Deva*. What does it mean? Is the word Jana Vishesh represent a member of the human family? It is made to appear super human agency. By this the pith of history contained in it is squeezed out.

Along with the word Deva occur the names of Yaksha, Gana, Gandharva, Kinnaras. Who were they? The impression one gets on reading the Mahabharata and Ramayana is that they are imaginary beings who filled the horizon but did not exist.

But the Yaksha, Gana, Gandharva, Kinnaras were also members of the human family. They were in the service of the Devas. The Yakshas were guarding the palaces. Ganas were guarding the Devas. Gandharvas were amusing the Devas by music and dancing. The Kinnaras were also in the service of the Gods. The descendants of the Kinnaras are even now living in Himachal Pradesh.

Take the name Asura. The description of Asura given in the Mahabharata and Ramayana makes out as though they belonged to non-human world. An Asura is described to eat ten carts-load of food. They are monsters in size. They sleep for six months. They have ten mouths. Who is a Rakshas? He too is described as a non-human creature. In size, in his capacity for eating, in his habits of life he resembled the Asura.

There are plenty of references to the Nagas. But who is a Naga? A Naga is represented as a serpent or a snake. Can this

* Dr. Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 151-152.

be true? Whether true or not, it is so and Hindus believe it. Ancient Indian history must be exhumed. Without its exhumation Ancient India will go without history. Fortunately, with the help of the Buddhist literature, Ancient Indian History can be dug out of the debris which the Brahmin writers have heaped upon in a fit of madness.

The Buddhist literature helps a great deal to remove the debris and see the underlying substance quite clearly and distinctly.

The Buddhist literature shows that the Devas were a community of human beings. There are so many Devas who come to the Buddha to have their doubts and difficulties removed. How could this be unless the Devas were human beings.

Again the Buddhist canonical literature throws a flood of light on the puzzling question of the Nagas. It makes a distinction between womb-born Nagas and egg-born Nagas and thereby making it clear that the word Naga has two-fold meaning. In its original sense it stood for the name of a human community.

The Asuras again are not monsters. They too are a Jan-Vishesh human beings. According to Satpatha Bramhana, the Asuras are the descendants of Prajapati the Lord of the creation. How they became evil spirits is not known. But the fact is recorded that they fought against the Devas for the possession of the earth and that they were overcome by the Devas and that they finally succumbed. The point is clear that the Asuras were members of the human family and not monsters.

With this exhumation of debris, we can see Ancient Indian History in a new light.

2

THE STATE OF THE ARYAN SOCIETY*

To understand the great reform which the Buddha brought about by his teaching, it is necessary to have some idea of the degraded condition of the Aryan civilization at the time when Buddha started on the mission of his life.

The Aryan Community of his time was steeped in the worst kind of debauchery: social, religious and spiritual.

To mention only a few of the social evils, attention may be drawn to gambling. Gambling had become as widespread among the Aryans as drinking.

Every king had a hall of gambling attached to his palace. Every king had an expert gambler in his employment as a companion to play with. King Virat had in his employment Kank as an expert gambler. Gambling was not merely a pastime with kings, they played with heavy stakes. They staked kingdoms, dependents, relatives, slaves, servants.[1] King Nala staked everything in gambling with Paskkar and lost everything. The only thing he did not stake was himself and his wife Damayanti. Nala had to go and live in the forest as a beggar. There were kings who went beyond Nala. The Mahabharata[2] tells how Dharma** the eldest of the Pandavas gambled and staked everything his brothers and also his and their wife Draupadi. Gambling was a matter of honour with the Aryans and any invitation to gamble was regarded as an injury to one's honour and dignity. Dharma gambled with such disastrous consequences although he was warned beforehand. His excuse was that he was invited to gamble and that as a man of honour he could not decline such an invitation.

This vice of gambling was not confined to kings. It had infected even the common folk. Rig-Veda contains lamentations of a poor Aryan ruined by gambling. The habit of gambling

* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 168-176.
** Yudhishthira.

had become so common in Kautilya's time that there were gambling houses licensed by the king from which the king derived considerable revenue.

Drinking was another evil which was rampant among the Aryans. Liquors were of two sorts, *Soma* and *Sura*. *Soma* was a sacrificial wine. The drinking of the Soma was in the beginning permitted only to Brahmins, Kashatriyas and Vaishyas. Subsequently it was permitted only to Brahmins and Kashatriyas. The Vaishyas were excluded from it and the Shudras were never permitted to taste it. Its manufacture was a secret known only to the Brahmins. *Sura* was open to all and was drunk by all. The Brahmins also drank *Sura*. That shows that the best among the Aryan Society were not only not free from the drink habit but that they drank heavily. The most shameful part of it was that even the Aryan women were addicted to drink. For instance *Sudeshna*[3] the wife of king *Virat* tells her maid *Sairandhri* to go to *Kichaka's* palace and bring *Sura* as she was dying to have a drink. It is not to be supposed that only queens indulged in drinking. The habit of drinking was common among women of all classes and even Brahmin women were not free from it.[4] That liquor and dancing was indulged in by the Aryan women is clear from the *Kaushaki Grihya Sutra* I. 11-12, which says, "Four or eight women who are not widowed after having been regaled with wine and food are to dance for four times on the night previous to the wedding ceremony."

Turning to the Aryan Society it was marked by class war and class degradation. The Aryan Society recognized four classes, the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. These divisions were not merely horizontal divisions, all on a par with each other in the matter of social relationship. These divisions, had become vertical, one above the other. Being placed abcve or below there was both jealousy and rivalry among the four classes. This jealousy and rivalry had given rise even to enmity. This enmity was particularly noticeable between the two highest classes, namely the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas and there was a regular class war between the two, so intense that it would delight the heart of any Marxian to read the descriptions thereof. Unfortunately there is no detailed history of this class war between the Brahmins and the

Kshatriyas. Only a few instances have been recorded, Vena, Pururavas, Nahusha, Sudas, Sumukh and Nimi were some of the Kshatriya kings who came into the conflict with the Brahmins. The issues in these conflicts were different.

The issue between Vena and the Brahmins was whether a King could command and require the Brahmins to worship him and offer sacrifice to him instead of the Gods. The issue between Pururavas and the Brahmins was whether a Kshatriya King could confiscate the property of a Brahmin. The issue between Nahusha and the Brahmins was whether a Kshatriya king could order a Brahmin to do a servile job. The issue between Nimi and the Brahmins was whether the king was bound to employ only his family priest at the sacrificial ceremony. The issue between Sudas and the Brahmins was whether the king was bound to employ only a Brahmin as a priest.

This shows how big were the issues between the two classes. No wonder that the struggle between them was also the bitterest. The wars between them were not merely occasional riots. They were wars of extermination. It is stated that Parashuram a Brahmin fought against the Kshatriyas twenty-one times and killed every Kshatriya.

While the two classes were fighting among themselves for supremacy, they both combined to keep down the Vaishyas and the Shudras. The Vaishya was a milch cow. He lived only to pay taxes. The Shudra was a general beast of burden. These two classes existed for the sole purpose of making the life of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas glorious and happy. They had no right to live for themselves. They lived to make the life of their betters possible.

Below these two classes there were others. They were the Chandalas and Shwappakas. They were not untouchables but they were degraded. They were outside the pale of society and outside the pale of law. They had no rights and no opportunities. They were the rejects of the Aryan Society.

The sexual immorality of the Aryan Society must shock their present day descendants. The Aryans of pre-Buddhist days had no such rule of prohibited degrees as we have today to govern their sexual or matrimonial relationship.

There was prevalent among the Aryans the practice of renting out their women to others for a time. As an illustration may be mentioned the story of Madhavi[5] The king Yayati gave his daughter Madhavi as an offering to his guru Galav. Galav rented out the girl Madhavi to three kings each a period. Thereafter he gave her in marriage to Vishwamitra. She remained with him until a son was born to her. Thereafter Galav took away the girl and gave her back to her father Yayati.

Besides the practice of letting out women to others temporarily at a rent, there was prevalent among the Aryans another practice namely, allowing procreation by the best amongst them. Raising a family was treated by them as though it was a breeding or stock raising. Among the Aryas there was a class of persons called *Devas* who were Aryans but of a superior status and prowess. The Aryans allowed their women to have sexual intercourse with any one of the class of Devas in the interest of good breeding. This practice prevailed so extensively that the Devas came to regard prelibation in respect of the Aryan women as their prescriptive right. No Aryan woman could be married unless this right of prelibation had been redeemed and the woman released from the control of the Devas by offering what was technically called *Avadan*. The Laja Hoame which is performed in every Hindu marriage and the details of which are given in the Ashwalayan Grahya Sutra is a relic of this act of the redemption of the Aryan woman from the right of prelibation of the Devas. The *Avadan* in the Laja Hoame is nothing but the price for the extinguishment of the right of the Devas over the bride. The *Saptapadi* performed in all Hindu marriages and which is regarded as the most essential ceremony without which there is no lawful marriage has an integral connection with this right of prelibation of the Devas. Saptapadi means walking by the bridegroom seven steps with the bride. Why is this essential? The answer is that the Devas if they were dissatisfied with the compensation could claim the woman before the seventh step was taken. After the seventh step was taken, the right of the Devas was extinguished and the bridegroom could take away the bride and live as husband and wife without being obstructed or molested by the Devas.

The religion of the Aryans consisted of the *Yajna* or sacrifice. The sacrifice was a means to enter into the god–head of the gods, and even to control the gods. The traditional sacrifices were twenty one in number divided into three classes of seven each. The first were sacrifices of butter, milk, corn, etc. The second class covered *Soma* sacrifices and third animal sacrifices. The sacrifice may be of short duration or long duration lasting for a year or more. The latter was called a *Sattra*. The argument in favour of the sacrifice is that eternal holiness is won by him that offers the sacrifice. Not only a man's self but also his Manes stood to benefit by means of sacrifice. He gives the Manes pleasure with his offering, but he also raises their estate, and sends them up to live in a higher world.[6]

The sacrifice was by no means meant as an aid to the acquirement of heavenly bliss alone. Many of the great sacrifices were for the gaining of good things on earth. That one should sacrifice without the ulterior motive of gain is unknown. Brahmanic India knew no thank-offering. Ordinarily the gain is represented as a compensating gift from the divinity, whom they sacrifice. The sacrifice began with the recitation: "He offers the sacrifice to the god with this text: 'Do thou give to me (and) I (will) give to thee: do thou bestow on me (and) I (will) bestow on thee."

The ceremony of the sacrifice was awe-inspiring. Every word was pregnant with consequences and even the pronunciation of the word or accent was fateful. There are indications, however, that the priests themselves understood that, much in the ceremonial was pure hocuspocus, and not of much importance as it was made out to be.

Every sacrifice meant fee to the priest. As to fee, the rules were precise and their propounders were unblushing. The priest performed the sacrifice for the fee alone, and it must consist of valuable garments, kine, horses or gold—when each was to be given was carefully stated. The priests had built up a great complex of forms, where at every turn fees were demanded. The whole expense, falling on one individual for whose benefit the sacrifice was performed, must have been enormous. How costly the whole thing became can be seen from the fact that in one place the fee for the sacrifice is

mentioned as one thousand cows. For this greed, which went so far that he proclaimed that he who gives a thousand cows obtains all things of heaven. The priest had a good precedent to cite, for, the gods of heaven, in all tales told of them, ever demand a reward from each other when they help their neighbour gods. If the Gods seek rewards, the priest has a right to do the same.

The principal sacrifice was the animal sacrifice. It was both costly and barbaric. In the Aryan religion there are five sacrificial animals mentioned. In this list of sacrificial animals man came first. The sacrifice of a man was the costliest. The rules of sacrifice required that the individual to be slaughtered must be neither a priest nor a slave. He must be a Kshatriya or Vaishya. According to the ordinary valuation of those times the cost of buying a man to be sacrificed was one thousand cows. Besides being costly and barbaric, it must have been revolting because the sacrificers had not only to kill the man but to eat him. Next to man came the horse. That also was a costly sacrifice because the horse was a rare and a necessary animal for the Aryans in their conquest of India. The Aryans could hardly afford such a potent instrument of military domination to be offered as sacrifice. The sacrifice must have been revolting in as much as one of the rituals in the horse-sacrifice was the copulation of the horse before it was slaughtered with the wife of the sacrificer.

The animals most commonly offered for sacrifice were of course the cattle which were used by the people for their agricultural purposes. They were mostly cows and bullocks.

The Yajnas were costly and they would have died out of sheer considerations of expense involved. But they did not. The reason is that the stoppage of Yajna involved the question of the loss of the Brahmin's fees. There could be no fees if the Yajna ceased to be performed and the Brahmin would starve. The Brahmin therefore found a substitute for the costly sacrificial animals. For a human sacrifice the Brahmin allowed as a substitute for a live man, a man of straw or metal or earth. But they did not altogether give up human sacrifice for fear that this Yajna might be stopped and they should lose their fees. When human sacrifice became rare, animal sacrifice

came in as a substitute. Animal sacrifice was also a question of expense to the laity. Here again rather than allow the sacrifice to go out of vogue, the Brahmins came forward with smaller animals for cattle just as cattle had been allowed to take the place of the man and the horse. All this was for the purpose of maintaining the *Yajna* so that the Brahmin did not lose his fees which was his maintenance. So set were the Brahmins on the continuance of the Yajna that they were satisfied with merely rice as an offering.

It must not however be supposed that the institution of substitutes of the Yajnas of the Aryans had become less horrid. The introduction of substitutes did not work as a complete replacement of the more expensive and more ghastly sacrifice by the less expensive and the more innocent. All that it meant was that the offering may be according to the capacity of the sacrificer. If he was poor his offering may be rice. If he was well-to-do it might be a goat. If he was rich it might be a man, horse, cow or a bull. The effect of the substitutes was that the Yajna was brought within the capacity of all so that the Brahmin reaped a larger harvest of feast on the total. It did not have the effect of stopping animal sacrifice. Indeed animals continued to be sacrificed by the thousands.

The Yajna often became a regular carnage of cattle at which the Brahmins did the work of butchers. One gets some idea of the extent of this carnage of innocent animals from references to the Yajnas which one comes across in Buddhist literature. In the Suttanipata a description is given of the Yajna that was arranged to be performed by Pasenadi, king of Kosala. It is stated that there were tied to the poles for slaughter at the Yajna five hundred oxen, five hundred bulls, five hundred cows, five hundred goats and five hundred lambs and that the servants of the king who were detailed to do the jobs according to the orders given to them by the officiating Brahmin priests were doing their duties with tears in their eyes.

The Yajna besides involving a terrible carnage was really a kind of carnival. Besides roast meet there was drink. The Brahmins had Soma as well as Sura. The others had Sura in abundance. Almost every Yajna was followed by gambling and

what is most extraordinary is that, side by side there went on also sexual intercourse in the open. Yajna had become debauchery and there was no religion left in it.

The Aryan religion was just a series of observances. Behind these observances there was no yearning for a good and a virtuous life. There was no hunger or thirst for rightousness. Their religion was without any spiritual content. The hymns of the Rig Veda furnish very good evidence of the absence of any spiritual basis for the Aryan religion. The hymns are prayers addressed by the Aryans to their gods. What do they ask for in these prayers? Do they ask to be kept away from temptation? Do they ask for deliverance from evil? Do they ask for forgiveness of sins? Most of the hymns are in praise of Indra. They praise him for having brought destruction to the enemies of the Aryans. They praise him because he killed all the pregnant wives of Krishna, an Asura. They praise him because he destroyed hundreds of villages of the Asuras. They praise him because he killed lakhs of Dasyus. The Aryans pray to Indra to carry on greater destruction among the Anaryas in the hope that they may secure to themselves the food supplies of the Anaryas and the wealth of the Anaryas. Far from being spiritual and elevating, the hymns of the Rig-Veda are saturated with wicked thoughts and wicked purposes. The Aryan religion never concerned itself with what is called a righteous life.

Such was the state of the Aryan Society when Buddha was born. There are two pertinent questions regarding Buddha as a reformer who laboured to reform the Aryan Society. What were the chief planks in his reform? To what extent did he succeed in his reform movement?

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Mahabharata -Vanparva.
2. Ibid., Sabhaparva.
3. Ibid., Viratparva Ad. XV 10.
4. That the drinking of intoxicating liquor was indulged in by Brahmin women, not to speak of women of the lower *Varnas*, as late as the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. in the Central region of Aryavarta, is clear from Kumarila Bhatta's *Tantra-Vartika* I (iii). 4, which states, "Among the people of modern days we find the Brahmin women of the countries of Ahicchatra and Mathura to be addicted to drinking. "Kumarila condemned the practice in the case of Brahmins only, but not of Kshatriyas and Vaishyas men and women if the liquor was distilled from fruits or flowers (Madhavi), and Molasses (Gaudi) and not from grains (Sura).
5. Mahabharata Udyoga Parva. Adh. 106-123.
6. This is taken from Hopkins—The Religions of India.

3

BUDDHIST REVOLUTION

1. The Buddha*

Siddhartha, surname Gautama, was born in the Sakya clan at Kapilavastu in Northern India, on the borders of Nepal in 563 B.C. Tradition says he was a prince. He received education fit for a prince, was married and had a son. Oppressed by the evils and misery then prevalent in the Aryan Society he renounced the world at the age of twenty-nine and left his home in search for truth and deliverance. He became a mendicant and studied with two distinguished teachers, but finding that their teachings did not satisfy him he left them and became an ascetic. He gave up that also as being futile. By hard thinking he got insight into things and as a result of this insight he formulated his own *Dhamma*. This was at the age of thirty-five. The remainder of his eighty years he spent in spreading his Dhamma and founding and administering an order of monks. He died about the year 483 B.C. at Kusinara surrounded by his devoted followers.

To the carrying out of his mission, the Buddha devoted all his days after the achievement of enlightenment. His time was divided between feeding the lamp of his own spiritual life by solitary meditation—just as Jesus spent hours in lonely prayer—and active preaching to large audiences of his monks, instructing the more advanced in the subtle points of inner development, directing the affairs of the Order, rebuking breaches of discipline, confirming the faithful in their virtue, receiving deputations, carrying on discussions with learned opponents, comforting the sorrowful, visiting kings and peasants, Brahmins and outcasts, rich and poor. He was a friend of publicans and sinners, and many a public harlot, finding herself understood and pitied, gave up her evil ways to take refuge in the "Blessed One". Such a life demanded a variety of moral qualities and

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* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, 1987, Vol. 3, pp. 165-168, 186-188.

social gifts, and among others a combination of democratic sentiments with an aristocratic *Savoir Faire* which is seldom met with. In reaching the dialogues one can never forget that Gotama had the birth and upbringing of an aristocrat. He converses not only with Brahmins and pundits but with princes and ministers and kings on easy and equal terms. He is a good diner-out, with a fund of anecdotes and apparently a real sense of humour, and is a welcome guest at every house. A distinguished Brahmin is pictured as describing him thus:

> 'The Venerable Gotama is well born on both sides, of pure descent.... is handsome, pleasant to look upon, inspiring trust, gifted with great beauty of complexion, fair in colour, fine in presence, stately to behold, virtuous with the virtue of the Arhats, gifted with goodness and virtue and with a pleasant voice and polite address, with no passion of lust left in him nor any fickleness of mind. He bids all men welcome, is congenial, conciliatory, not supercilious, accessible to all, not backward in conversation.'

But what appealed most to the India of his time, and has appealed most to India through the ages, is expressed by the Brahmin in these words:

> "The monk Gotama has gone forth into the religious life, giving up the great clan of his relatives, giving up much money and gold, treasure both buried and above ground. Truly while he was still a young man, without a gray hair on his head, in the beauty of his early manhood he went forth from the household life into the homeless state".
>
> "Such a life as his, demanded not only pleasant manners, sympathy and kindness, but firmness and courage. When the occasion required it, he could be calmly severe with those who worked evil for the Order. Physical pain, he bore not only with equanimity but with no diminution of his inner joy. Courage also was needed and was found: as, for example, in the Buddha's calm attitude during Devadatta's various attempts to assassinate him, in facing threats of murder, and in the conversion of the famous bandit in the Kingdom of Kosala, whom all the countryside feared, and whom the Buddha visited, alone and unarmed, in his lair, changing him from a scourge of the kingdom to a peaceful member of the Order. Neither pain, danger, nor insults marred his spiritual peace. When he was reviled he reviled not again. Nor was he lacking in tender thoughtfulness for those who needed his comfort and support."*

This was indeed the highest standard for a moral life for an individual to follow. So high a standard of moral life was quite unknown to the Aryan Society of his day.

He did not stop merely with setting an example by leading a life of purity. He also wanted to mould the character of the ordinary men and women in society. For their guidance he devised a form of baptism which was quite unknown to the Aryan Society. The baptism consisted in the convert to Buddhism undertaking to observe certain moral precepts laid down by Buddha. These precepts are known as Panch Sila or the five precepts. They are: (1) Not to kill, (2) Not to steal, (3) Not to lie, (4) Not to be unchaste and (5) Not to drink intoxicants. These five precepts were for the laity. For the Monks there were five additional precepts: (6) Not to eat at forbidden times, (7) Not to dance, sing, or attend theatrical or other spectacles, (8) To abstain from the use of garlands, scents, and ornaments, (9) To abstain from the use of high or broad beds, and (10) Never to receive money.

These *Silas* or precepts formed the moral code which it was intended should regulate the thoughts and actions of men and women.

Of these, the most important one was the precept not to kill. Buddha took care to make it clear that the precept did not merely mean abstention from taking life. He insisted that the precept must be understood to mean positive sympathy, good-will, and love for every thing that breathes...

He gave the same positives and extended content to other precepts. One of the Buddha's lay followers once reported to him the teaching of a non-Buddhist ascetic, to the effect that the highest ideal consisted in the absence of evil deeds, evil words, evil thoughts, and evil life. The Buddha's comment

* Dr. Ambedker Writings and Speeches, Vol.3, pp. 165-167.

upon this is significant. "If, said he, "this were true, then every suckling child would have attained the ideal of life ..... life is knowledge of good and evil; and after that the exchange of evil deeds, words, thoughts, and life, for good ones. This is to be brought about only by a long and determined effort of the will"...

Buddha's teachings were not merely negative. They are positive and constructive. Buddha was not satisfied with a man following his precepts. He insisted upon encouraging others to follow them. For example in the *Auguttara Nikaya* the Buddha is quoted as distinguishing between a good man and a very good man by saying that one who abstains from killing, stealing, unchastity, lying and drunkenness may be called good; but only he deserves to be called very good who abstains from these evil things himself and also instigates others to do alike...

As has been well said the two cardinal virtues of Buddhism are love and wisdom.

How deeply he inculcated the practice of love as a virtue is clear from his own words. "As a mother at the risk of her life watches over her own child, her only child, so also let every one cultivate a boundless loving mind towards all beings. And let him cultivate good-will towards, all the world, a boundless (loving) mind above and below and across, unobstructed, without hatred, without enmity. This way of living is the best in the world." So taught Buddha.[1]

"Universal pity, sympathy for all suffering beings, good-will to every form of sentient life, these things characterized the Tathagata (Buddha) as they have few others of the sons of men; and he succeeded in a most surprizing degree in handing on his point of view to his followers."[2]

Buddha held to the doctrine of wisdom as firmly as he did to the doctrine of love. He held that moral life began with knowledge and ended with wisdom, he "came to save the world, and his method for the accomplishment of this end was the destruction of ignorance and the dissemination of knowledge as to the true values of life and the wise way to live." Buddha did not arrogate to himself the power to save people. People

had to do that for themselves. And the way to save lay through knowledge. So much insistence did he place upon knowledge that he did not think that morality without knowledge was virtue."*

He was beloved of all. Repeatedly he is described or describes himself, as one born into the world for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, for the advantage, the good, the happiness of gods and men, out of compassion for the world.

He left an indelible mark on the Aryan Society and although his name has gone out of India the impression of his teaching still remains.

His religion spread like wild fire. It soon became the religion of the whole of India. But it did not remain confined to India. It reached every corner of the then known world. All races accepted it. Even the Afghans were once Buddhists. It did not remain confined to Asia. There is evidence to show that Buddhism was the religion of celtic Britain.[3]

What was the cause of this rapid spread of Buddhism? On this point what Prof. Hopkins has said is worth quoting. This is what he says[4]:

> "The cause, then, of the rapid spread of Buddhism at the beginning of its career lies only in the conditions of its teaching and the influential backing of its founder. It was the individual Buddha that captivated men, it was the teaching that emanated from him that fired enthusiasm; it was his position as an aristocrat that made him acceptable to the aristocracy, his magnetism that made him the idol of the people. From every page stands out the strong attractive personality of this teacher and winner of hearts. No man ever lived so godless yet so godlike. Arrogating to himself no divinity, despairing of future bliss, but without fear as without hope, leader of thought but despising lovingly the folly of the world, exalted but adored, the universal brother, he wandered among men, simply, serenely; with gentle irony subduing them that opposed him, to congregation after congregation speaking with majestic sweetness, the

* Ibid., pp 186-188.

master to each, the friend of all. His voice was singularly vibrant and eloquent; his very tones convinced the hearer, his looks inspired awe. From the tradition it appears that he must have been one of those whose personality alone suffices to make a man not only a leader but a god to the hearts of his fellows. When such a one speaks he obtains hearers. It matters little what he says, for the influences the motions, and bends whoever listens to his will. But if added to this personality, if encompassing it, there be the feeling in the minds of others that what this man teaches is not only a variety, but the very hope of their salvation; if for the first time they recognize in his words the truth that makes of slaves free men, of classes a brotherhood, then it is not difficult to see wherein lies the lightening like speed with which the electric current passes from heart to heart. Such a man was Buddha, such was the essential of his teaching; and such was the inevitable rapidity of Buddhistic expansion and the profound influence of the shock that was produced by the new faith upon the moral consciousness of Buddha's people"*

2. The Buddha and the Vedic Rishis**

1. The Vedas are a collection of *Mantras,* i.e., hymns or chants. The reciters of these hymns are called Rishis.

2. The Mantras are mere invocations to deities such as *Indra, Varuna, Agni, Soma, Isana, Prajapati, Bramha, Mahiddhi, Yama* and others.

3. The invocations are mere prayers for help against enemies, for gift of wealth, for accepting the offerings of food, flesh and wine from the devotee.

4. There is not much philosophy in the Vedas. But there were some Vedic sages who had entered into speculations of a philosophical nature.

5. These Vedic sages were (1) Aghamarsana; (2) Prajapati Parmesthin; (3) Brahmanaspati, otherwise known as Brihaspati; (4) Anila; (5) Dirghatamas; (6) Narayana; (7) Hiranyagarbha; and (8) Visvakarman.

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* Ibid., pp.167-168

** The Buddha and His Dhamma, 1957, pp. 81-83.

6. The main problems of these Vedic philosophers were: How did the world originate? In what manner were individual things created? Why have they their unity and existence? Who created, and who ordained? From what did the world spring up and to what again will it return?

7. *Aghamarsana* said that the world was created out of Tapas (heat). Tapas was the creative principle from which eternal law and truth were born. From these were produced the night (tamas). Tamas produced water and from water originated time. Time gave birth to the sun and the moon, the heaven and the earth, the firmament and light and ordained the days and nights.

8. *Brahmanaspati* postulated the genesis of being from non-being. By the term non-existence, he denoted apparently the infinite. The existent originally sprang up from the non-existent. The non-existent (asat, nonens) was the permanent foundation of all that is existent (sat, ens) and of all that is possible and yet non-existent (asat).

9. *Prajapati Parmesthin* started with the problem: "Did being come out of non-being?" His view was that this was an irrelevant question. For him water was the original substance of that which exists. For him the original matter—water—came neither under the definition of being nor under that of non-being.

10. *Paramesthin* did not draw any distinction between matter and motive power. According to him, water transformed itself into particular things by some inherent principle to which he gave the name Kama, Cosmic Desire.

11. *Anila* was another Vedic Philosopher. To him the principal element was air (vayu). It possess the inherent capacity for movement. It is endowed with the generating principle.

12. *Dirghatamas* maintained that all living beings rest and depend ultimately on the sun. The sun held up and propelled by its inherent force went backward and forward.

13. The sun is composed of a grey coloured substance and so are lightning and fire.

14. The sun, lightning and fire formed the germ of water.

Water forms the germ of plants. Such were the views of *Dirghatamas*.

15. According to *Narayana*, Purusha (God) is the first cause of the universe. It is from Purusha that the sun, the moon, the earth, water, fire, air, mid-air, the sky, the regions, the seasons, the creatures of the air, all animals, all classes of men, and all human institutions, had originated.

16. *Hiranyagarbha*. From doctrinal point of view he stood midway between *Parmeshthin* and *Narayana*. Hiranyagarbha means the golden germ. It was the great power of the universe, from which all other powers and existences, divine and earthly, were derived.

17. *Hiranyagarbha* means fire. It is fire that constituted the solar essence, the generating principle of the universe.

18. From the point of view of *Vishvakarman* it was quite inadequate and unsatisfactory to hold that water was the primitive substance of all that is, and then to derive from it this world as a whole by giving it an inherent power of movement. If water be the primitive substance which is endowed with the inherent principle of change, we have yet to account for that from which water derived its being, and derived the motive power, the generating principle, the elemental forces, the laws and all the rest.

19. *Vishvakarman* held the view that it was God which was the motive power. God is first and God is last. He is earlier than the visible universe; he had existed before all cosmic forces came into being. He is the sole God who created and ordained this universe. God is one, and the only one. He is the unborn one (aja) in whom all the existing things abide. He is the one who is mighty in mind and supreme in power. He is the maker—the disposer. As father he generated us, and as disposer he knows the fate of all that is.

20. The Buddha did not regard all the Vedic Sages as worthy of reverence. He regarded just ten Vedic Rishis as the most ancient and as the real authors of the Mantras.

21. But in the Mantras he saw nothing that was morally elevating.

22. In his view the Vedas were as worthless as a desert.

23. The Buddha, therefore, discarded the Mantras as a source from which to learn or to borrow.

24. Similarly, the Buddha did not find any thing in the philosophy of the Vedic Rishis. They were groping to reach the truth. But they had not reached it.

25. Their theories were mere speculations not based on logic nor on facts. Their contributions to philosophy created no social values.

26. He therefore rejected the philosophy of the Vedic Rishis as useless.

3. The Buddha and the Bramhanas*

1. Next to the Vedas are the religious books known as the Bramhanas. Both were held as sacred books. Indeed the Bramhanas are a part of the Vedas. The two went together and were called by a common name Sruti.

2. There were four theses on which the Bramhanic Philosophy rested.

3. The first thesis was that the Vedas are not only sacred but that they are infallible and they are not to be questioned.

4. The second thesis of the Bramhanic Philosophy was that salvation of the soul—that is escape from transmigration—can be had only by the due performance of the Vedic sacrifices and observances of religious rites and ceremonies and the offering of gifts to Brahmins.

5. The Brahmins had not only a theory of an ideal religion as contained in the Vedas but they also had a theory for an ideal society.

6. The pattern of this ideal society they named *Chaturvarna*. It is imbedded in the Vedas and as the Vedas are infallible and as their authority cannot be questioned so also Chaturvarna as a pattern of society was binding and unquestionable.

7. This pattern of society was based upon certain rules.

8. The first rule was that society should be divided into four classes: (1) Brahmins; (2) Kshatriyas; (3) Vaishyas; and (4) Shudras.

* The Buddha and His Dhamma, 1957, pp. 87-92.

9. The second rule was that there cannot be social equality among these four classes. They must be bound together by the rule of graded inequality.

10. The Brahmins to be at the top, the Kshatriyas to be kept below the Brahmins but above the Vaishyas, the Vaishyas to be below the Kshatriyas but above the Shudras and the Shudras to be the lowest of all.

11. These four classes were not to be equal to one another in the matter of rights and privileges. The rule of graded inequality governed the question of rights and privileges.

12. The Brahmin had all the rights and privileges which he wished to claim. But a Kshatriya could not claim the rights and privileges which a Brahmin could. He had more rights and privileges than a Vaishya could claim. The Vaishya had more rights and privileges than a Shudra. But he could not claim the rights and privileges which a Kshatriya could. And the Shudra was not entitled to any right, much less any privilege. His privilege was to subsist without offending the three superior classes.

13. The third rule of Chaturvarna related to the division of occupations. The occupation of the Brahmin was learning and teaching and the performance of religious observances. The occupation of the Kshatriya was fighting. Trade was assigned to the Vaishyas. The occupation of the Shudras was service of the three superior classes. These occupations assigned to different classes were exclusive. One class could not trespass upon the occupation of the other.

14. The fourth rule of Chaturvarna related to the right to education. The pattern of Chaturvarna gave the right to education to the first three classes, the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. The Shudras were denied the right to education. This rule of Chaturvarna did not deny the right to education to the Shudras only. It denied the right to education to all women including those belonging to the class of Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas.

15. There was a fifth rule. According to it, man's life was divided into four stages. The first stage was called *Bramhacharya*; the second stage was called *Grahastashram*; the third stage was called *Vanaprasta* and the fourth stage was called *Sannyasa*.

16. The object of the first stage was study and education. The object of the second stage was to live a married life. The object of the third stage was to familiarise a man with the life of a hermit, i.e., severing family ties, but without deserting his home. The object of the fourth stage was to enable a man to go in search of God and seek union with him.

17. The benefits of these stages were open only to the male members of the three superior classes. The first stage was not open to the Shudras and women. Equally the last stage was not open to the Shudras and women.

18. Such was the divine pattern of an ideal society called Chaturvarna. The Brahmins had indealised the rule and had realised the ideal without leaving any cracks or loopholes.

19. The fourth thesis of Brahmanic Philosophy was the doctrine of Karma. It was part of the thesis of transmigration of the soul. The Karma of the Brahmins was an answer to the question: "Where did the soul land on transmigration with his new body on new birth?" The answer of the Brahmanic Philosophy was that it depended on a man's deeds in his past life. In other words, it depended on his Karma.

20. The Buddha was strongly opposed to the first tenet of Brahmanism. He repudiated their thesis that the Vedas are infallible and their authority could never be questioned.

21. In his opinion, nothing was infallible and nothing could be final. Everything must be open to re-examination and reconsideration whenever grounds for re-examination and reconsideration arise.

22. Man must know the truth and real truth. To him freedom of thought was the most essential thing. And he was sure that freedom of thought was the only way to the discovery of truth.

23. Infallibility of the Vedas meant complete denial of freedom of thought.

24. For these reasons this thesis of the Brahmanic Philosophy was most obnoxious to him.

25. He was equally an opponent of the second thesis of the Brahmanic Philosophy. The Buddha did admit that there was any virtue in a sacrifice. But he made a distinction between true sacrifice and false sacrifice.

26. Sacrifice in the sense of self-denial for the good of others he called true sacrifice,. Sacrifice in the sense of killing an animal as an offering to God for personal benefit he regarded as a false sacrifice.

27. The Brahmanic sacrifices were mostly sacrifices of animals to please their gods. He condemned them as false sacrifices. He would not allow them even though they be performed with the object of getting salvation for the soul.

28. The opponents of sacrifices used to ridicule the Brahmins by saying: "If one can go to heaven by sacrificing an animal, why should not one sacrifice one's own father. That would be a quicker way of going to heaven."

29. The Buddha wholeheartedly agreed with this view.

30. The theory of *Chaturvarna* was as repugnant to the Buddha as the theory of sacrifices was repulsive to him.

31. The organization of society set up by Brahmanism in the name of *Chaturvarna* did not appear to him a natural organization. Its class composition was compulsory and arbitrary. It was a society made to order. He preferred an open society and a free society.

32. The *Chaturvarna* of the Brahmins was a fixed order never to be changed. Once a Brahmin always a Brahmin. Once a Kshatriya always a Kshatriya, once a Vaishya always a Vaishya and once a Shudra always a Shudra. Society was based on status conferred upon an individual by the accident of his birth. Vice, however heinous, was no ground for degrading a man from his status, and virtue, however great, had no value to raise him above it. There was no room for worth nor for growth.

33. Inequality exists in every society. But it was different with Brahmanism. The inequality preached by Brahmins was its official doctrine. It was not a mere growth. Brahmanism did not believe in equality. In fact, it was opposed to equality.

34. Brahmanism was not content with inequality. The soul of Brahmanism lay in graded inequality.

35. Far from producing harmony, graded inequality, the Buddha thought, might produce in society an ascending scale of hatred and a descending scale of contempt, and might be a source of perpetual conflict.

36. The occupations of the four classes were also fixed. There was no freedom of choice. Besides, they were fixed not in accordance with skill but in accordance with birth.

37. On a careful review of the rules of *Chaturvarna* the Buddha had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the philosophic foundations on which the social order was reared by Brahmanism were wrong if not selfish.

38. It was clear to him that it did not serve the interests of all, much less did it advance the welfare of all. Indeed, it was deliberately designed to make many serve the interests of the few. In it man was made to serve a class of self-styled supermen.

39. It was calculated to suppress and exploit the weak and to keep them in a state of complete subjugation.

40. The law of Karma as formulated by the Brahmins, thought the Buddha, was calculated to sap the spirit of revolt completely. No one was responsible for the suffering of man except he himself. Revolt could not alter the state of suffering; for suffering was fixed by his past Karma as his lot in this life.

41. The Shudras and women—the two classes whose humanity was most mutilated by Brahmanism, had no power to rebel against the system.

42. They were denied the right to knowledge with the result that by reasons of their enforced ignorance they could not realize what had made their condition so degraded. They could not know that Brahmanism had robbed them completely of the significance of their life. Instead of rebelling against Brahmanism they had become the devotees and upholders of Brahmanism.

43. The right to bear arms is the ultimate means of achieving freedom which a human being has. But the Shudras were denied the right to bear arms.

44. Under Brahmanism the Shudras were left as helpless victims of a conspiracy of selfish Brahmanism, powerful and deadly Kshatriyas and wealthy Vaishyas.

45. Could it be amended? Knowing that it was a divinely ordained social order, he knew that it could not be. It could only be ended.

46. For these reasons the Buddha rejected Brahmanism as being opposed to the true way of life.

4. The Buddha and the Upanishads*

1. The Upanishads constituted another piece of literature. It is not part of the Vedas. It is uncanonical.

2. All the same they did form a part of religious literature.

3. The number of the Upanishads is quite large. Some important, some quite unimportant.

4. Some of them were ranged against the Vedic theologians, the Brahmin priests.

5. All of them agreed in viewing Vedic study as a study of nescience or ignorance (avidya).

6. They were all agreed in their estimate of the four Vedas and the Vedic science as the lower knowledge.

7. They were all agreed in questioning the divine origin of the Vedas.

8. They were all agreed in denying the efficacy attributed to sacrifices, to the funeral oblations, and the gifts to the priests which are the fundamentals of the Brahmanic philosophy.

9. This, however, was not the main topic with which the Upanishads were concerned. Their discussions centered round Brahman and Atman.

10. Brahman was the all-pervading principle which binds the universe and that salvation lay in the Atman realizing that it is Brahman.

11. The main thesis of the Upanishads was that *Brahmana* was a reality and that *Atmana* was the same as *Brahmana*. The *Atmana* did not realize that it was *Brahman* because of the *Upadhis* in which it was entangled.

12. The question was: Is Brahman a reality? The acceptance of the Upanishadic thesis depended upon the answer to this question.

13. The Buddha could find no proof in support of the thesis that *Brahmana* was a reality. He, therefore, rejected the thesis of the Upanishads.

* The Buddha and His Dhamma, 1957, pp. 92-93.

14. It is not that questions on this issue were not put to the authors of the Upanishads. They were:

15. Such questions were put to no less a person than Yajnavalkya, a great *seer* who plays so important a part in the Brahadarnyka Upanishad.

16. He was asked: "What is Brahmana? What is Atmana? "All that Yajnavalkya could say: "Neti! Neti! I know not! I know not!"

17. "How can anything be a reality about which no one knows anything," asked the Buddha. He had, therefore, no difficulty in rejecting the Upanishadic thesis as being based on pure imagination.

5. What The Buddha Taught*

The Third Book of 'The Buddha and His Dhamma' has its title 'What the Buddha Taught'. In it the Teachings of the Master have been explained by the author by giving correct interpretation of the word 'Dhamma'. The Teachings have been divided into three groups i.e., (a) Dhamma, (b) Adhamma, and (c) Saddhamma. In brief, the three categories are as follows:

(A) What is Dhamma?[5]

1. To maintain purity of life is Dhamma.
2. To reach perfection in life is Dhamma.
3. To live in Nibbana is Dhamma.
4. To give up craving is Dhamma.
5. To believe that all compounded things are impermanent is Dhamma.
6. To believe that Karma is the instrument of Moral Order is Dhamma.

(B) What is Adhamma?[6]

1. Belief in the Supernatural is Not-Dhamma (Adhamma).
2. Belief in Ishwara (God) is not Essentially a part of Dhamma.
3. Dhamma based on Union with Brahma is a False Dhamma.

* The Buddha and His Dhamma, 1957, pp. 227, 247, 279, 240-245, 249-250, 259-278, 281-285.

4. Belief in Soul is Not-Dhamma.
5. Belief in Sacrifices is Not-Dhamma.
6. Belief based on Speculation is Not-Dhamma.
7. Reading of Books is Not-Dhamma.
8. Belief in the infallibility of books of Dhamma is Not-Dhamma.

(C) What is Saddhamma?[7]

Section I—The Functions of Saddhamma.

1. To cleanse the Mind of its impurities.
2. To make the world a Kingdom of Righteousness.

Section II—*Dhamma to be Saddhamma must promote Pradnya*

1. Dhamma is Saddhamma when it makes learning open to all.

2. Dhamma is Saddhamma when it teaches that mere learning is not enough. It may lead to pedantry.

3. Dhamma is Saddhamma when it teaches that what is needed is Pradnya.

Section III—*Dhamma to be Saddhamma must promote Maitri.*

1. Dhamma is Saddhamma only when it teaches that mere Pradnya is not enough. It must be accompanied by Sila.

2. Dhamma is Saddhamma only when it teaches that besides Pradnya and Sila what is necessary is Karuna.

3. Dhamma is Saddhamma only when it teaches that more than Karuna what is necessary is Maitri.

Section IV—*Dhamma to be Saddhamma must pull down all social barriers.*

1. Dhamma to be Saddhamma must break down barriers between man and man.

2. Dhamma to be Saddhamma must teach that worth and not birth is the measure of man.

3. Dhamma to be Saddhamma must promote equality between man and man.

Since the items 5 and 6 of 'Dhamma'; items 1, 4-8 of 'Adhamma (Not-Dhamma)', and Section I (1 and 2) of

'Saddhamma' primarily highlight the revolutionary character of the Teachings of the Buddha, the same are reproduced here in toto as described by Dr. Ambedkar.

(A) DHAMMA

To Believe That All Compound Things are Impermanent is Dhamma[8]

1. This doctrine of impermanence has three aspects.

2. There is the impermanence of composite things.

3. There is the impermanence of the individual being.

4. There is the impermanence of the self-nature of conditioned things.

5. The impermanence of composite things has been well explained by the great Buddhist philosopher Asanga.

6. "All things", says Asanga, "are produced by the combination of causes and conditions and have no independent noumenon of their own. When the combination is dissolved, their destruction ensures.

7. "The body of a living being consists of the combination of four great elements, viz., earth, water, fire and air, and when this combination is resolved into the four component elements, dissolution ensues.

8. "This is what is called the impermanence of a composite entity."

9. Impermanence of the living individual is best described by the formula—being is becoming.

10. In this sense a being of a past moment has lived, but does not live nor will he live. The being of a future moment will live but has not lived nor does he live; the being of the present moment does live but has not lived and will not live.

11. In short, a human being is always changing, always growing. He is not the same at two different moments of his life.

12. The third phase of the doctrine of impermanence is somewhat difficult for a common man to follow.

13. To realize that every living being will die sometime or other is a very easy matter to understand.

14. But it is not quite so easy to understand how a human being can go on changing—becoming—while he is alive.

15. "How is this possible?" The Buddha's answer was, "This is possible because all is impermanent".

16. This later on gave rise to what is called Sunnya Vad.

17. The Buddhist Sunnyata does not mean nihilism out and out. It only means the perpetual changes occurring at every moment in the phenomenal world.

18. Very few realize that it is on account of Sunnyata that everything becomes possible; without it nothing in the world would be possible. It is on the impermanence of the nature of all things that the possibility of all other things depends.

19. If things were not subject to continual change but were permanent and unchangeable, the evolution of all of life from one kind to the other and the development of living things would come to a dead stop.

20. If human beings had not died or changed but had continued always in the same state what would the result have been? The progress of the human race would have come to a dead halt.

21. Immense difficulty would have arisen if Sunnya is regarded as being void or empty.

22. But this is not so. Sunnya is like a point which has substance but neither breadth nor length.

23. All things are impermanent was the doctrine preached by the Buddha.

24. What is the moral of this doctrine of the Buddha? This is a much more important question.

25. The moral of this doctrine of impermanence is simple. Do not be attached to anything.

26. It is to cultivate detachment, detachment from property, from friends, etc., that he said "these are impermanent."

To Believe That Karma is the Instrument of Moral Order is Dhamma[3]

1. There is an order in the physical world. This is proved by the following phenomenon.

2. There is a certain order in the movements and actions of the starry bodies.

3. There is a certain order by which seasons come and go in regular sequence.

4. There is a certain order by which seeds grow into trees and trees yield fruits and fruits give seeds.

5. In Buddhist terminology these are called Niyamas, laws which produce an orderly sequence such as Rutu Niyam, Bija Niyam.

6. Similarly is there a moral order in Human Society. How is it produced? How is it maintained?

7. Those who believe in the existence of God have no difficulty in answering the question. And their answer is easy.

8. Moral order, they say, is maintained by Divine Dispensation. God created the world and God is the Supreme Governor of the world. He is also the author of moral as well as of physical law.

9. Moral law, according to them, is for man's good because it ensues from Divine will. Man is bound to obey God who is his maker and it is obedience to God which maintains the moral order.

10. Such is the argument in support of the view that the moral order is maintained by Divine Dispensation.

11. The explanation is by no means satisfactory. For if the moral law has originated from God, and if God is the beginning and end of the moral order and if man cannot escape from obeying God, why is there so much moral disorder in the world?

12. What is the authority of the Divine Law? What is the hold of the divine Law over the individual? These are pertinent questions. But to none of them is there any satisfactory answer from those who rely on Divine Dispensation as the basis for the moral order.

13. To overcome these difficulties the thesis has been somewhat modified.

14. It is said: no doubt creation took effect at the command of God. It is also true that the cosmos entered upon its life by

his will and by his direction. It is also true that He imparted to the cosmos once for all the energy which served as the driving power of a stupendous mechanism.

15. But God leaves it to Nature to work itself out in obedience to the laws originally given by him.

16. So that if the moral order fails to work out as expected by God, the fault is of Nature and not of God.

17. Even this modification in the theory does not solve the difficulty. It only helps to exonerate God from his responsibility. For the question remains, why should God leave it to Nature to execute His laws? What is the use of such an absentee God?

18. The answer which the Buddha gave to the question,—"How is moral order maintained?" is totally different.

19. His answer was simple. "It is the Kamma Niyam and not God which maintains the moral order in the universe". That was the Buddha's answer to the question.

20. The moral order of the universe may be good or it may be bad. But according to the Buddha the moral order rests on man and on nobody else.

21. Kamma means man's action and Vipaka is its effect. If the moral order is bad it is because man does Akusala (Bad) Kamma. If the moral order is good it is because man does Kusala (Good) Kamma.

22. The Buddha was not content with merely speaking of Kamma. He spoke of the law of Kamma which is another name for Kamma Niyam.

23. By speaking of the law of Kamma what the Buddha wanted to convey was that the effect of the deed was bound to follow the deed, as surely as night follows day. It was like a Niyam or rule.

24. No one could fail to benefit by the good effects of a Kusala Kamma and no one could escape the evil effects of Akusala Kamma.

25. Therefore, the Buddha's admonition was: Do Kusala Kamma so that humanity may benefit by a good moral order which a Kusala Kamma helps to sustain; do not do Akusala Kamma for humanity will suffer from the bad moral order which an Akusala Kamma will bring about.

26. It may be that there is a time interval between the moment when the Kamma is done and the moment when the effect is felt. It is so, often enough.

27. From this point of view, Kamma is either (1) Ditthadamma Vedaniya Kamma (Immediately Effective Kamma); (2) Upapajjavedaniya Kamma (Remotely Effective Kamma); and (3) Aporapariya Vedaniya Kamma (Indefinitely Effective Kamma).

28. Kamma may also fall into the category of Ahosi Kamma, i.e., Kamma which is non-effective. This Ahosi Kamma comprises all such Kammas which are too weak to operate, or which are counteracted by a more Kamma, at the time when it should have worked.

29. But making allowance for all these considerations, it does not in any sense derogate from the claim made by the Buddha that the law of Kamma is inexorable.

30. The theory of the law of Kamma does not necessarily involve the conception that the effect of the Kamma recoils on the doer of it and there is nothing more to be thought about it. This is an error. Sometimes the action of one affects another instead of the doer. All the same it is the working of the law of Kamma because it either upholds or upsets the moral order.

31. Individuals come and individuals go. But the moral order of the universe remains and so also the law of Kamma which sustains it.

32. It is for this reason that in the religion of the Buddha, Morality has been given the place of God.

33. Thus the Buddha's answer to the question—"How the moral order in the universe is sustained?" Is so simple and so irrefutable.

34. And yet its true meaning is scarcely grasped. Often, almost always, it is either misunderstood or misstated or misinterpreted. Not many seem to be conscious that the law of Kamma was propounded by the Buddha as an answer to the question—"How the moral order is maintained?"

35. That, however, is the purpose of Buddha's Law of Kamma.

36. The Law of Kamma has to do only with the question of general moral order. It has nothing to do with the fortunes or misfortunes of an individual.

37. It is concerned with the maintenance of the moral order in the universe.

38. It is because of this that the law of Kamma is a part of Dhamma.

(B) ADHAMMA

Belief in the Supernatural is not Dhamma[10]

1. Whenever any phenomenon occurs, humanity is always wanting to know how it has happened, what is the cause of it.

2. Sometimes cause and the effect are so proximate and so close that it is not difficult to account for the occurrence of the event.

3. But often-times the effect is so far away from the cause for the effect is not accountable. Apparently there appears to be no cause for it.

4. Then the question arises: How has this event occurred?

5. The commonest answer is that the occurrence of the event is due to some supernatural cause which is often called a miracle.

6. The Buddha's predecessors gave very different answers to this question.

7. Pakauda Katyana denied that there was a cause for every event. Events, he said, occurred independently.

8. Makhali Ghosal admitted that an event must have a cause. But he preached that the cause is not to be found in human agency but is to be sought in nature, necessity, inherent laws of things, predestination or the like.

9. The Buddha repelled these doctrines. He maintained that not only every event has a cause but the cause is the result of some human action or natural law.

10. His contention against the doctrine of Time, Nature, Necessity, etc., being the cause of the occurrence of an event, was this.

11. If Time, Nature, Necessity, etc., be the sole cause of the occurrence of an event, then who are we?

12. Is man merely a puppet in the hands of Time, Nature, Chance, Gods, Fate, Necessity?

13. What is the use of man's existence if he is not free? What is the use of man's intelligence if he continues to believe in supernatural causes?

14. If man is free, then every event must be the result of man's action or of an act of Nature,. There cannot be any event which is supernatural in its origin.

15. It may be that man is not able to discover the real cause of the occurrence of an event. But if he has intelligence he is bound one day to discover it.

16. In repudiating supernaturalism the Buddha had three objects.

17. His first object was to lead man to the path of rationalism.

18. His second object was to free man to go in search of truth.

19. His third object was to remove the most potent source of superstition, the result of which is to kill the spirit of inquiry.

20. This is called the law of Kamma or Causation.

21. This doctrine of Kamma and Causation is the most central doctrine in Buddhism. It preaches Rationalism and Buddhism is nothing if not Rationalism.

22. That is why worship of the supernatural is Not—Dhamma.

Belief in Soul is Not Dhamma[11]

1. The Buddha said that religion based on soul is based on speculation.

2. Nobody has seen the soul or has conversed with the soul.

3. The soul is unknown and unseen.

4. The thing that exists is not the soul but the mind. Mind is different from the soul.

5. Belief in soul, He said is unprofitable.

6. A religion based on soul is therefore not worth having.

7. It only ends in creating superstition.

8. The Buddha did not leave the question there. He discussed it in all its aspects.

9. Belief in the existence of soul is as common as the belief in the existence of God.

10. Belief in the existence of soul was also a part of the Brahmanic Religion.

11. In the Brahmanic Religion the soul is called *Atma* or *Atman*.

12. In the Brahmanic Religion, Atman is the name given to an entity which was held to be abiding separate from the body, but living inside the body constantly existing from the moment of his birth.

13. Belief in the soul included other beliefs connected with it.

14. The soul does not die with the body. It takes birth in another body when it comes into being.

15. The body serves as an external clothing for the soul.

16. Did the Buddha believe in the soul? No, He did not. His doctrine about the soul is called Anatta, no soul.

17. Given a disembodied soul various questions arise: What is the soul? Where did it come from? What becomes of it on the death of the body? Where does it go? In what form does it exist "hereafter". How long does it remain there? These questions the Buddha tried to argue out with the upholders of the doctrine of the soul.

18. He first tried to show how vague was the idea about the soul by his usual method of cross-examination.

19. He asked those who believed in the existence of the soul, what the soul was like in size and in shape.

20. To Ananda he said the declarations concerning the soul are abounding. Some declare: "My soul has a form and it is minute." Others declare the soul to have form and to be boundless and minute. Others declare it to be formless and boundless.

21. "In so many ways, Ananda, are declarations made concerning the soul."

22. "How is the soul conceived by those who believe in the soul?" Was another question raised by the Buddha. Some say, "My soul is feeling." Others say, "Nay, my soul is not feeling, my soul is not sentient"; or again: "Nay, my soul is not feeling, nor is it non-sentient; my soul has feeling it has the property of sentience." Under such aspects as these is the soul conceived.

23. The Buddha next asked those who believed in the existence of the soul as to the condition of the soul after the death of the body.

24. He also raised the question whether the soul was visible after the death of the body.

25. He found infinite number of vague statements.

26. Does the soul keep its form after the death of the body? He found that there were eight different speculations.

27. Does the soul die with the body? There were innumerable speculations on this.

28. He also raised the question of the happiness or misery of the soul after the body is dead. Is the soul happy after the death of the body? On this also the Recluses and Brahmins differed. Some said it was altogether miserable. Some said it was happy. Some said it is both happy and miserable and some said it is neither happy nor miserable.

29. His answer to all these theories about the existence of the soul was the same which he gave to Cunda.

30. To Cunda he said: "Now, Cunda, to those recluses and Brahmins, who believe and profess any one of these views, I go and say this, 'Is this so, friends?' And if they reply: 'Yes, This alone is true, any other view is absurd.' I do not admit their claim. Why is this? Because persons hold different opinions on such questions. Nor do I consider this (or that) view on a level with my own, let alone higher."

31. Now the more important question is what were the arguments of the Buddha against the existence of the soul.

32. The general arguments he advanced in support of his denial of the soul were the same as those which he advanced in support of his denial of the existence of God.

33. He argued that the discussion of the existence of the soul is as unprofitable as the discussion of the existence of God.

34. He argued that the belief in the existence of the soul is as much against the cultivation of *Samma Ditthi* as the belief in the existence of God.

35. He argued that the belief in the existence of the soul is as much a source of superstition as the belief in God is. Indeed in his opinion the belief in the existence of a soul is far more dangerous than the belief in God. For not only does it create a priesthood, not only is it the origin of all superstition but it gives the priesthood complete control over man from birth to death.

36. Because of these general arguments it is said that the Buddha did not express any definite opinion on the existence of the soul. Others have said that he did not repudiate the theory of the existence of the soul. Others have said that he was always dodging the issue.

37. These statements are quite incorrect. For to Mahali he did tell in most positive terms that there is no such thing as a soul. That is why his theory of the soul is called Anatta, i.e., non-soul.

38. Apart from the general arguments against the existence of the soul, the Buddha had a special argument against the existence of the soul which he regarded as fatal to the theory of the soul.

39. His theory against the existence of the soul as a separate entity is called Nama-Rupa.

40. The theory is the result of the application of the Vibhaja test, of sharp, rigorous analysis, of the constituent elements of Sentient Being otherwise called Human Personality.

41. Nama-Rupa is a collective name for a Sentient Being.

42. According to the Buddha's analysis, a Sentient Being is a compound thing consisting of certain physical elements and certain mental elements. They are called *Khandas*.

43. The Rupa Khanda primarily consists of the physical elements such as earth, water, fire and air. They constitute the Body of Rupa.

44. Besides Rupa Khanda, there is such a thing as Nama Khanda which goes to make up a Sentient Being.

45. This Nama Khanda is called Vinana, or consciousness. This Nama Khanda includes the three mental elements: Vedana (sensation springing from contact of the six senses with the world), Sanna (perception); Sankhara (states of mind). Chetana (consciousness) is sometimes spoken of along with the three other mental states as being one of them. A modern psychologist would say that consciousness is the mainspring from which other psychological phenomena arise. Vinana is the centre of a sentient being.

46. Consciousness is result of the combination of the four elements, Prithi, Apa, Tej and Vayu.

47. An objection is raised to this theory of consciousness propounded by the Buddha.

48. Those who object to this theory ask, "How is consciousness produced?"

49. It is true that consciousness arises with birth and dies with death. All the same, can it be said that consciousness is the result of the combination of the four elements?

50. The Buddha's answer was not that the co-existence or aggregation of the physical elements produces consciousness. What the Buddha said was that wherever there was rupa or kaya there was consciousness accompanying it.

51. To give an analogy from science, there is an electric field and wherever there is an electric field it is always accompanied by a magnetic field. No one knows how the magnetic field is created or how it arises. But it always exists along with the electric field.

52. Why should not the same relationship be said to exist between body and consciousness?

53. The magnetic field in relation to the eletric field is called an induced field. Why cannot consciousness be called an induced field in relation to Rupa-Kaya.

54. The Buddha's argument against the soul is not yet complete. He had further to say something of importance.

55. Once consciousness arises man becomes a sentient being. Consciousness is, therefore, the chief thing in man's life.

56. Consciousness is cognitive, emotional and volitional.

57. Consciousness is cognitive when it gives knowledge, information, as appreciating or apprehending, whether it be appreciation of internal facts or of external things and events.

58. Consciousness is emotional when it exists in certain subjective states, characterized by either pleasurable or painful tones, when emotional consciousness produces feeling.

59. Consciousness in its volitional stage makes a being exert himself for the attainment of some end. Volitional consciousness gives rise to what we call will or activity.

60. It is thus clear that all the functions of a sentient being are performed by the sentient being through and as a result of consciousness.

61. After this analysis the Buddha asked what are the functions which are left to be performed by the soul? All functions assigned to the soul are performed by consciousness.

62. A soul without any function is an absurdity.

63. This is how the Buddha disproved the existence of the soul.

64. That is why the existence of the soul cannot be a part of Dhamma.

Belief in Sacrifices is Not—Dhamma[12]

(i)

1. The Brahmanic religion was based upon sacrifices.

2. Some sacrifices were classified as *Nittya* and other sacrifices were classified as *Naimitik*.

3. The Nittya sacrifices were obligations and had to be performed whether one got any fruit therefrom or not.

4. The Naimitik sacrifices were performed when the performer wanted to gain something by way of worldly advantage.

5. The Brahmanic sacrifices involved drinking, killing animals and merry-making.

6. Yet these sacrifices were held as religious observances.

7. The Buddha declined to regard a religion based on sacrifices as worth having.

8. He has given his reasons to many a Brahmin who went to have a controversy with him as to why sacrifices were not part of religion.

9. It is reported that there were three Brahmins who had a controversy with him on the subject.

10. They were Kutadanta, Ujjaya and the third was Udayin.

11. Kutadanta the Brahmin requested the Blessed One to tell him what he thought about the value of a sacrifice.

12. The Blessed One said: "Well then, O Brahmin, give ear and listen attentively and I will speak".

13. "Very well, sir," said Kutadanta in reply; and the Blessed One spoke as follows:

14. "Long ago, O Brahmin, there was a king by name Maha Vigeta, mighty, with great wealth and large property; with stores of silver and gold, of aids to enjoyment, of goods and corn; with his treasure-houses and his garners full."

15. "Now when King Maha Vigeta was once sitting alone in meditation he became anxious at the thought: 'I have in abundance all the good things a mortal can enjoy. The whole wide circle of the earth is mine by conquest to possess. It were well if I were to offer a great sacrifice that should ensure me weal and welfare for many days.' "

16. "Thereupon the Brahmin who was chaplain said to the king: ' The king's country, sire, is harassed and harried. There are dacoits abroad who pillage the villages and townships and who make the roads unsafe. Were the king, so long as that is so, to levy a fresh tax, verily his majesty would be acting wrongly.' "

17. " 'But perchance his majesty might think: 'I'll soon put a stop to these scoundrels' game by degradation and banishment, and fines and bonds and death!' But their licence cannot be satisfactorily put a stop to. The remnant left unpunished would still go on harassing the realm.' "

18. "'Now there is one method to adopt to put a thorough end to this order. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who

devote themselves to keeping cattle and the farm, to them let His Majesty the King give food and seed-corn. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to trade, to them let His Majesty the King give capital. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to government service, to them let His Majesty the King give wages and food.'"

19. " 'Then those men, following each his own business, will no longer harass the realm; the king's revenue will go up; the country will be quiet and at peace; and the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing their children in their arms, will dwell with open doors without fear.' "

20. "Then King Maha Vigeta, O Brahmin, accepted the word of his chaplain, and did as he had said. And those men, following each his business, harassed the realm no more. And the King's revenue went up. And the country became quiet and at peace. And the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing their children in their arms, dwelt with open doors'."

21. "When peace and order was restored, King Maha Vigeta has his chaplain called again and said: 'The disorder is at an end. The country is at peace. I want to offer that great sacrifice—let the Venerable One instruct me how—for my weal and my welfare for many days.'"

22. "The chaplain, replying to the king, said, 'Be it so. Let His Majesty the King send invitations to those in the town and the country in his realm who are Kshatriyas, vassals of his; who are ministers and officials of his or who are Brahmins of position, or who are householders of substance, saying; 'I intend to offer a great sacrifice. Let the Venerable Ones give their sanction to what will be to me for weal and welfare for many days.' "

23. "Then the king, O Brahmin Kutadanta, accepted the word of his chaplain, and did as he had said. And they each—Kshatriya and Ministers and Brahmins and householders—made alike reply: 'Let His Majesty the King celebrate the sacrifice. The time is suitable, O King!' "

24. "King Vigeta was wise and gifted in many ways. And his chaplain was equally wise and gifted.' "

25. "The chaplain, O Brahmin, before the sacrifice had begun, explained to the king what is would involve.' "

26. 'Should His Majesty the King, before starting on the great sacrifice or whilst he is offering the great sacrifice, or when the great sacrifice has been offered, feel any such regret as: 'Great alas, has been the portion of my wealth used up herein,' let not the king hrabour such regret.' "

27. "And further, O Brahmin, the chaplain, before the sacrifice had begun, in order to prevent any compunction that might afterwards arise as regards those who had taken part therein, said: 'Now there will come to your sacrifice, sire, men who destroy the life of living things, and men who refrain therefrom—men who take what has not been given, and men who refrain therefrom, men who act evilly in respect of lusts, and men who refrain therefrom, men who speak lies, and men who do not, men who slander, and men who do not, men who speak rudely; and men who do not, men who chatter vain things and men who refrain therefrom, men who covet, and men who covet not, men who harbour ill will and men who harbour it not, men whose views are wrong, and men whose views are right. Of each of these let them, who do evil, alone with their evil. For them who do well let Your Majesty offer, for them, sire, arrange the rites, them let the king gratify, in them shall your heart within find peace.

28. "And further, O Brahmin, at that sacrifice neither were any oxen slain, neither goats, nor fowls, nor fatted pigs, nor were any kinds of living creatures put to death. No trees were cut down to be used as posts, no Dabbha grasses mown to strew around the sacrificial spot. And the slaves and messengers and workmen there employed were driven neither by rods nor fear, nor carried on their work weeping with tears upon their faces, Who chose to help, he worked who chose not to help, worked not. What each chose to do, he did; what they chose not to do, that was left undone. With ghee, and oil and butter, and milk and honey, and sugar only was that sacrifice accomplished."

29. "Let your sacrifice be such as that of King Vigeta if you at all wish to perform any sacrifice, Sacrifices are a waste. Animal sacrifices are cruelties. Sacrifices cannot be part of

religion. It is a worst form of religion which says you can go to heaven by killing an animal."

30. I was inclined to ask "Is there, O Gautama, any other sacrifice with more fruit and more advantage than killing animals?"

31. "Yes, O Brahmin, there is."

32. "And what, O Gautama, may that be?"

33. "When a man with trusting heart takes upon himself the precepts—abstinence from destroying life; abstinence from taking what has not been given; abstinence from evil conduct in respect of lusts; abstinence from lying words; abstinence from strong, intoxicating, maddening drinks, the root of carelessness that is a sacrifice better than open largesse, better than perpetual alms, better than the gift of dwelling places, better than accepting guidance."

34. And when he had thus spoken, Kutadanta the Brahmin said to the Blessed One: "Most excellent, O Gautama, are the words of thy mouth, most excellent."

(ii)

1. Now the Brahmin Ujjaya said this to the Exalted One:

2. "Pray, does the worthy Gautama praise sacrifice?"

3. "No, Brahmin, I do not praise every sacrifice. Yet I would not withhold praise from every sacrifice. In whatever sacrifice, Brahmin, cows are slaughtered, goats and sheep are slaughtered, poultry and pigs are slaughtered and divers living creatures come to destruction—such sacrifice, Brahmin, which involves butchery, I do not praise." "Why so?"

4. "To such a sacrifice, Brahmin, involving butchery, neither the worthy ones nor those who have entered on the worthy way draw near."

5. "But in whatever sacrifice, Brahmin, cows are not slaughtered—and living creatures come not to destruction, such sacrifice not involving butchery, I do praise; such as, for instance, a long-established charity, an oblation for the welfare of the family."

6. "Why so?" "Because, Brahmin, the worthy ones, those who have entered on the worthy way, do draw near to such a sacrifice which involves not butchery."

(iii)

1. The Brahmin Udayin asked the same question to the Exalted One as was asked by the Brahmin Ujjaya:

2. "Pray, does the worthy Gautama praise sacrifice?" The Buddha gave the same answer which he gave to Ujjaya.

3. He said:

"Fit sacrifice performed in season due
And free from cruelty, to such draw near
Those well trained in the God-life, even those
Who have the veil rolled back while (yet on earth),
Who have transcended time and going. Such do the enlightened praise, those skilled in merit.
"Whether in sacrifice or act of faith,
Oblation fitly made with heart devout
To that good field of Merit,—those who live
The Good—life, sacrificed, conferred,—so given Lavish the offering; devas therewith are pleased.
Thus offering, the thoughtful, thereby becoming wise,
Wins the blissful world from suffering free."

Belief Based on Speculation is Not—Dhamma[13]

(i)

1. It was usual to ask such questions as (1) Was I in ages past? (2) Was I not in ages past? (3) What was I then? (4) From what did I pass to what? (5) Shall I be in ages to come? (6) Shall I not be in ages to come? (7) What shall I then be? (8) How shall I then be? (9) From what shall I pass to what? Or, again, it is self today about which he is in doubt, asking himself—(1) Am I? (2) Am I not? (3) What am I? (4) How am I? (5) Whence came my being? (6) Whither will it pass?

2. As regards the Universe various questions were raised, Some of them were as follows:-

3. "How was the Universe created? Is it everlasting?"

4. In answer to the first question some said everything was created by Brahma—others said it was created by Prajapati.

5. In answer to the second question some said it was everlasting. Others said it was not. Some said it was finite. Others said it was infinite.

6. These questions the Buddha refused to entertain. He said that they could only be asked and entertained by wrong-headed people.

7. To answer these questions required omniscience which nobody had.

8. He said that he was not omniscient enough to answer these questions. No one could claim to know all that is to be known nor what we wish to know at any time is known at the time. There is always something that is unknown.

9. It is for these reasons that the Buddha excluded such doctrines from his religion.

10. He regarded a religion which made such doctrines a part of it as a religion not worth having.

(ii)

1. The doctrines with which the contemporaries of the Buddha had made the basis of their religion were concerned with (1) Self; and (2) the origin of the Universe.

2. They raised certain questions about the self. They asked: "(1) Was I in ages past? (2) Was I not in ages past? (3) What was I then? (3) What was I then? (4) From what did I pass to what? (5) Shall I be in ages to come? (6) Shall I not be in ages to come? (7) What shall I then be? (8) How shall I then be? (9) From what shall I pass to what? Or, again, it is self today about which he is in doubts, asking himself—(1) Am I? (2) Am I not? (3) What am I, (4) How am I, (5) Whence came my being? (6) Whither will it pass?"

3. Others raised the question regarding the origin of the Universe.

4. Some said it was created by Brahma.

5. Others said it was created by Prajapati sacrificing himself.

6. Other teachers had other questions to raise: "The world is everlasting,—the world is not everlasting—the world is finite,—the world is infinite, the body is the life (jiva),—the body is the one thing and the life another,—truth-finder exists after death,—a truth-finder does not exist after death,—he both exists and does not exist after death,—he neither exists nor does not exist after death."

7. These were questions which the Buddha said could be asked by wrong-headed persons.

8. There were three reasons why the Buddha condemned these religious theories.

9. In the first place, there was no reason to make them part of religion.

10. In the second place, to answer these questions required omniscience which nobody had. He emphasised this in his addresses.

11. He said that at one and the same time, no one can know and see everything. Knowledge is never final. There is always something more to be known.

12. The third argument against these theories was that they were merely speculative. They are not verified nor are they verifiable.

13. They were the result of imagination let loose. There was no reality behind them.

14. Besides of what good were these speculative theories to man in his relation to men? None whatever.

15. The Buddha did not believe that the world was created. He believed that the world had evolved.

Reading Books of Dhamma is Not—Dhamma[14]

1. The Brahmins put all their emphasis upon knowledge. They taught that knowledge was the be-all and end-all of every thing. Nothing further was to be considered.

2. The Buddha was on the other hand an upholder of education for all. Besides, he was more concerned with the use of knowledge a man is likely to make than with knowledge itself.

3. Consequently he was very particular to emphasize that he who has knowledge must have Sila (Virtue) and that knowledge without Sila (Virtue) was most dangerous.

4. The importance of Sila as against Prajna is well illustrated by what he told the Bhikkhu Patisena.

5. In olden times when Buddha was residing at Sravasti, there was an old mendicant called Patisena who being by

nature cross and dull, could not learn so much as one Gatha by heart.

6. The Buddha accordingly ordered 500 Arahats day by day to instruct him, but after three years he still was unable to remember even one Gatha.

7. Then all the peoples of the country (the four orders of people) knowing his ignorance, began to ridicule him, on which the Buddha, pitying his case, called him to his side, and gently repeated the following stanza: "He who guards his mouth, and restrains his thoughts, he who offends not with his body, the man who acts thus shall obtain deliverance.

8. Then Patisena, moved by a sense of the Master's goodness to him, felt his heart opened, and once he repeated the stanza.

9. The Buddha then addressed him further—"You now, an old man, can repeat a stanza only, and men know this, and they will still ridicule you, therefore, I will now explain the meaning of the verse to you, and do you on your part attentively listen."

10. Then the Buddha declared the three causes connected with the body, the four connected with the mouth, and the three connected with the thoughts, by destroying which men might obtain deliverance, on which the mendicant, fully realizing the truth thus explained, obtained the condition of an Arahat.

11. Now, at this time, there were 500 Bhikkhunis dwelling in their Vihara, who sent one of their number to the Buddha to request him to send them a priest to instruct them in the Dhamma.

12. On hearing their request the Buddha desired the old mendicant Patisena to go to them for this purpose.

13. On knowing that this arrangement had been made, all the nuns began to laugh together, and agreed on the morrow, when he comes, to say the Gatha wrong (backward), and so confuse the old man and put him to shame.

14. Then on the morrow when he came, all the Bhikkhunis, great and small, went forth to salute him and as they did so, they looked at one another and smiled.

15. Then sitting down, they offered him food. Having eaten and washed his hands, they then begged him to begin his sermon. On which the aged mendicant ascended the elevated seat, and sitting down, began:

16. "Sisters! My talent is small, my learning is very little. I know only one Gatha, but I will repeat that and explain its meaning. Do you listen with attention and understand."

17. Then all the young nuns began to attempt to say the Gatha backwards; but lo! they could not open their mouths; and filled with shame, they hung down their heads in sorrow.

18. Then Patisena having repeated the Gatha, began to explain it, as the Buddha instructed him.

19. Then all the Bhikkhunis hearing his words, were filled with surprise, and rejoicing to hear such instruction, with one heart they received it, and became Arahats.

20. On the day after this, the King Prasenjit invited the Buddha and the whole congregation of priests to assemble at his palace to partake of hospitality.

21. The Buddha therefore recognizing the superior and revered appearance of Patisena, desired him to bear his alms-dish and follow him as he went.

22. But when they came to the palace gate, the porter, knowing his character (antecedents), would not let him go into the hall, saying: "We have no hospitality for a priest who knows but one Gatha; there is no room for such common fellows as you—make place for your betters and begone."

23. Patisena accordingly sat down outside the door.

24. The Buddha now ascended the dais, after having washed his hands, and lo! the arm of Patisena, with the alms-dish in its hand, entered the room.

25. Then the king, the ministers, and all the assembly seeing this sight, were filled with astonishment, and said, "Ah! Who is this?"

26. On which the Buddha replied, "It is Patisena, the mendicant. He has but just obtained enlightenment, and I desired him to bear my alms-dish behind me; but the porter has refused him admission."

27. On this he was admitted and entered the assembly.

28. Then Prasenjit, turning to Buddha, said: "I hear that this Patisena is a man of small ability, and knows only one Gatha, how, then, has he obtained the supreme wisdom?"

29. To which Buddha replied: "Learning need not be much, conduct (Sila) is the first thing.

30. "This, Patisena, has allowed the secret virtue of the words of this one Gatha to penetrate his spirit; his body, mouth, and thoughts have obtained perfect quietude; for though a man knows ever so much, if his knowledge reaches not to his life, to deliver him from the power which leads to destruction, what benefit can all his learning be?"

31. Then the Buddha said:

32. "Although a man repeats a thousand stanzas (sections), but understands not the meaning of the lines he repeats, his performance is not equal to the repetition of one sentence well understood, which is able when heard to control thought. To repeat a thousand words without understanding, what profit is there in this? But to understand one truth, and hearing it, to act accordingly, this is to find deliverance.

33. "A man may be able to repeat many books but if he cannot explain them what profit is there in this? But to explain one sentence of the law and to walk accordingly, this is the way to find supreme wisdom."

34. On hearing these words, the two hundred bhikkhus, the king and his ministers were filled with joy.

Belief in the Infallibility of Books of Dhamma is Not—Dhamma[15]

1. The Brahmins had declared that the Vedas were not only sacred but in point of authority they were final.

2. Not only were the Vedas declared by the Brahmins to be final but they were declared by them to be infallible.

3. The Buddha was totally opposed to the Brahmins on this point.

4. He denied that the Vedas were sacred. He denied that whatever the Vedas said was final. He denied that the Vedas were infallible.

5. There were many teachers who had taken the same position as he had done. However, later on they or their followers all gave in order to win respect and goodwill from the Brahmins for their systems of philosophy. But the Buddha never yielded on this issue.

6. In the Tevijja Sutta the Buddha declared that the Vedas were a waterless desert, a pathless jungle, in fact perdition. No man with intellectual and moral thirst can go to the Vedas and hope to satisfy his thirst.

7. As to infallibility of the Vedas, he said nothing is infallible, not even the Vedas. Everything, he said, must be subject to examination and re-examination.

8. This he made clear in his sermon to the Kalamas.

9. Once the Blessed One, while passing through the land of the Kosalas accompanied by a large following of disciples, came to the town of Kesaputta which was inhabited by the Kalamas.

10. When the Kalamas came to know of his arrival they betook themselves thither where the Blessed One was and sat down on one side. So seated, the Kalamas of Kesaputta spoke thus to the Blessed One:

11. "There are, Lord, some ascetics and recluses who come to Kesaputta and who elucidate and exalt their own views, but they break up, crush down, revile and oppose the views of others. And there be other ascetics and recluses, Lord, who come to Kesaputta, and they too expound and magnify their own beliefs, but destroy, suppress, despise and set themselves against the beliefs of others."

12. "And so, Lord, we are in uncertainty and doubt, knowing not which among these venerable ascetics speaks truth and which falsehood."

13. "Good cause, indeed, have you Kalamas to be uncertain; good cause have you to doubt," said the Blessed One. "Truly, upon just occasion has uncertainty and doubt arisen in you."

14. "Come O you Kalamas," continued the Lord, "do not go merely by what you hear; do not go merely by what has been handed down from one to another; do not go by what is commonly reported; do not go merely by what is found written

in the scriptures; do not go by subtleties of reasoning, do not go by subtleties of logic; do not go merely by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by agreeable beliefs and views; do not go merely by what looks to be genuine; do not go merely by word of some ascetic or superior."

15. "What, then, should we do? What test should we apply?" asked the Kalamas.

16. "The tests are these," replied the Blessed One; "ask yourselves, do we know whether: 'These things are insalutary; these things are blame-worthy; these things are reprehended by the wise; these things being done or attempted lead to ill-being and to suffering.'

17. "Kalamas, you should go further and ask whether the doctrine taught promotes craving, hatred, delusion, and violence.

18. "This is not enough, Kalamas, you should go further and see whether the doctrine is not likely to make a man captive of his passions, and is not likely to lead him to kill living creatures; take what has not been given to him; go after another's wife; utter falsehood, and cause others to practise like deeds?"

19. "And finally you should ask: 'Whether all this does not tend to his ill-being and suffering.' "

20. "Now, Kalamas, what think you?"

21. "Do these things tend to man's ill-being or well-being?"

22. "To his ill-being, Lord," replied the Kalamas.

23. "What think you, Kalamas,—are these things salutary or insalutary?"

24. "They are insalutary, Lord."

25. "Are these things blameworthy?"

26. "Blameworthy, Lord," replied the Kalamas.

27. "Reprehended by the wise or approved by the wise?"

28. "Reprehended by the wise," replied the Kalamas.

29. "Being done or attempted, do they lead to ill-being and to suffering?"

30. "Done or attempted, Lord they lead to ill-being and to suffering."

31. "A scripture which teaches this cannot be accepted as final or infallible?"

32. "No, Lord," said the Kalamas.

33. "But this, O Kalamas, is just what I have said. What I have said is "do not go merely by what you hear; do not go merely by what has been handed down from one to another; do not go merely by subtleties of reasoning; do not go by subtleties of logic; do not go by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by agreeable beliefs and views; do not go merely by the word of some ascetic or superior.

34. "Only when of yourselves you indeed know: 'These things are insalutary; these things are blame-worthy; these things are reprehended by the wise; these things being done or attempted lead to ill-being and to suffering'—then, Kalamas, you should put them away."

35. "Wonderful, Lord, most wonderful! We go to Lord, the Blessed One, for refuge, and to his Teachings. As followers, Lord may the Blessed One accept us, from this day henceforth long as life shall last, we take our refuge in you."

36. The substance of the argument is plain. Before you accept anybody's teachings as authoritative, do not go by the fact that it is contained in the scriptures, do not go by the subtleties of logic; do not go by considerations based upon mere appearances; do not go merely by the fact that beliefs and views preached are agreeable; do not go merely because they look to be genuine; do not go merely by the fact that the beliefs and views are those of some ascetic or superior.

37. But consider whether the beliefs and views sought to be inculcated are salutary or insalutary, blameworthy or blameless, lead to well-being or ill-being.

38. It is only on these grounds that one can accept the teachings of anybody.

(C) SADDHAMMA

The Functions of Saddhamma

To Cleanse the Mind of its Impurities[16]

1. Once when the Blessed Lord was residing at Shravasti,

Prasenjit, the king of the Kosalas, came to the place where he was staying and descending from his chariot, approached the Teacher with the deepest reverence.

2. And invited him on the morrow to enter the city and partake of his hospitality, with a view to exhibit to the people the excellence of his person and doctrine, that they might believe in him.

3. The Buddha having consented, on the morrow entered the city with all his disciples, and having passed through the four cross streets of the town, he came to the place appointed and sat down.

4. After finishing the meal, he began, on the request of the king, to preach in the midst of the four highways, whilst his auditors were very many.

5. At this time there were two merchants listening to him.

6. One of them reflected, "What excellent wisdom on the part of the king to have such doctrines as these publicly preached! How wide their application, how searching their character!"

7. The other reflected thus, "What folly is this on the part of the king, bringing this man here to preach!"

8. "Like the calf that follows the cow, here and there, fastened to a vehicle she draws, bleating as it goes, so is this Buddha following the king." The two merchants having departed from the city came to an inn where they put up.

9. In taking some wine the good merchant was restrained and protected by the four guardian spirits that watch over the world.

10. The other, on the contrary, was incited by an evil spirit to drink on, till he was overpowered by sleep, and lay down in the road near the inn.

11. Early in the morning, the merchants' wagons leaving the place, the drivers not perceiving the man lying in the road, crushed him to death by the wagon wheels.

12. The other merchant, having come to a distant country, was selected by the genuflection of a sacred horse to succeed the king; and he accordingly was appointed to the throne.

13. After this, considering the strange turn, events had taken, he returned and invited the Buddha to visit him, and preach to his people.

14. On which occasion the World-honoured One declared the reason of the death of the evil-minded merchant, and the prosperity of him who thought wisely, and then added these lines:

15. *"The mind is the origin of all this is; the mind is the master, the mind is the cause.*

16. *"If in the midst of the mind there are evil thoughts, then the words are evil, the deeds are evil, and the sorrow which results from sin follows that man, as the chariot wheel follows him (or it) who draws it.*

17. *"The mind is the origin of all that is; it is the mind that commands, it is the mind that contrives.*

18. *"If in the mind there are good thoughts, then the words are good and the deeds good, and the happiness which results from such conduct follows that man, as the shadow accompanies the substance."*

19. On hearing these words, the king and his ministers, with countless others, were converted, and became disciples.

To Make the World a Kingdom of Righteousnesss[17]

1. What is the purpose of Religion?

2. Different religions have given different answers.

3. To make man seek after God and to teach him the importance of saving his soul is the commonest answer one gets to this question.

4. Most religions speak of three kingdoms.

5. One is called the kingdom of heaven. The second is called the kingdom of earth and the third is called the kingdom of hell.

6. This kingdom of heaven is said to be ruled by God. The kingdom of hell is described to be a place where the supremacy of the Evil One is undisputed. The kingdom of earth is disputed field. It is not under the dominance of the Evil One.

At the sametime God's sovereignty does not extend to it. It is hoped that one day it will.

7. In some religions the kingdom of heaven is said to be a kingdom in which Righteousness prevails no doubt because it is directly ruled by God.

8. In other religions the kingdom of heaven is not on earth. It is another name for heaven. It can be reached by one who believes in God and his Prophet. When he reaches heaven all the carnal pleasures of life are placed within the reach of all those who are faithful.

9. All religions preach that to reach this kingdom of heaven should be the aim of man and how to reach it is the end of all.

10. To the question "What is the purpose of religion?" The Buddha's answer is very different.

11. He did not tell people that their aim in life should be to reach some imaginary heaven. The kingdom of righteousness lies on earth and is to be reached by man by righteous conduct.

12. What he did was to tell people that to remove their misery each one must learn to be righteous in his conduct in relation to others and thereby make the earth kingdom of righteousness.

13. It is this which distinguishes his religion from all other religions.

14. His religion emphasizes Panch Sila, the Ashtanga Marga and the Paramitas.

15. Why did the Buddha make them the basis of his religion? Because they constitute a way of life which alone can make man righteous.

16. Man's misery is the result of man's inequity to man.

17. Only righteousness can remove this inequity and the resultant misery.

18. That is why he said that religion must not only preach but must inculcate upon the mind of man the supreme necessity for being righteous in his conduct.

19. For the purpose of inculcating righteousness religion, he said, had certain other functions to undertake.

20. Religion must teach man to know what is right and to follow what is right.

21. Religion must teach man to know what is wrong and not to follow what is wrong.

22. Besides these purposes of religion he emphasized two other purposes which he regarded as of supreme importance.

23. The first is training of man's instincts and disposition as distinguished from offering prayers or performing observances or doing sacrifices.

24. This the Buddha has made clear in his exposition of Jainism in the Devadaha Sutta.

25. What Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, affirmed was that whatsoever the individual experiences—be it pleasant or unpleasant, all comes from acts done in former births.

26. That being so, by expiration and purge of former misdeeds and by not committing fresh misdeeds, nothing accrues for the future: as nothing accrues for the future, the misdeeds die away: as misdeeds die away, misery dies away: as misery dies away, feelings die away: and as feelings die away, all misery will wear out and pass.

27. This is what Jainism affirmed.

28. On this the Buddha asked this question: "Do you know that, here and now, wrong dispositions have been got rid of and right dispositions acquired?"

29. The answer was "No".

30. "What is the use," asked the Buddha, "of a purge for former misdeeds, what is the use of not committing fresh misdeeds, if there is no training of the mind to turn bad disposition into good disposition."

31. This was in his opinion a very serious defect in religion. *A good disposition is the only permanent foundation of and guarantee of permanent goodness.*

32. That is why the Buddha gave the first place to the training of the mind which is the same as the training of a man's disposition.

33. The second thing to which he gave great importance is courage to stand by what is right even if one is alone.

34. In the Sallekha-Sutta the Buddha has emphasized this point.

35. This is what he has said:

36. "You are to expunge by resolving that, though others may be harmful, you will be harmless.

37. "That though others may kill, you will never kill.

38. "That though others may steal, you will not.

39. "That though others may not lead the higher life, you will.

40. "That though others may lie, traduce, denounce or prattle, you will not.

41. "That though others may be covetous, you will covet not.

42. "That though others may be malignant, you will not be malignant.

43. "That though others may be given over to wrong views, wrong aim, wrong speech, wrong actions, and wrong concentration, you must follow (the Noble Eightfold Path in) right outlook, right aims, right speech, right actions, right mode of livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

44. "That though others are wrong about the truth and wrong about Deliverance, you will be right about truth and right about Deliverance.

45. "That though others may be possessed by sloth and torpor, you will free yourselves therefrom.

46. "That though others may be puffed up, you will be humble-minded.

47. "That though others may be perplexed by doubts, you will be free from them.

48. "That though others may harbour wrath, malevolence, envy, jealousy, niggardliness, avarice, hypocrisy, deceit, imperviousness, arrogance, forwardness, association with bad friends, slackness, unbelief, shamelessness, unscrupulousness, lack of instruction, inertness, bewilderment, and unwisdom, you will be the reverse of all these things.

49. "That though others may clutch at and hug the temporal nor loose their hold thereon, you will clutch and hug the things that are not temporal, and will ensue Renunciation.

50. "I say it is the development of the will which is so efficacious for right states of consciousness, not to speak of act and speech. And therefore, Cunda, there must be developed the will to all the foregoing resolves I have detailed."

51. Such is the purpose of religion as conceived by the Buddha.

6. Comparison and Contrast*

The survey of the philosophical and religious thought shows that at the time when the Buddha formulated His Sasana, certain ideas had a grip on the mind of the people. They were:

(i) Belief in the infalibility of the Vedas.

(ii) Belief in Moksha or Salvation of the soul, i.e. its ceasing to be born again.

(iii) Belief in the efficacy of rites, ceremonies and sacrifices as means of obtaining moksha.

(iv) Belief in the Chaturvarna as the ideal for social organisation.

(v) Belief in Ishwara as the creator of and in Brahma as the principle underlying the universe.

(vi) Belief in Atmana or the soul.

(vii) Belief in Samsara (wandering together), i.e., transmigration of the soul.

(viii) Belief in Karma, i.e., the determination of man's position in present life by deeds done by him in his past life.

In formulating the principles of His Sasana, the Buddha dealt with this old stock of ideas in His own way.

(A) What He Rejected

The following are the ideas which He rejected:

(i) He condemned indulging the speculation as to the whence, whither and what am I?

* The Buddha and His Dhamma, 1957, pp. 103-104.

(ii) He discarded heresies about the soul and refrained from identifying it with either the body, sensations, volitions and consciousness.

(iii) He discarded all the Nihilistic views which were promulgated by certain religious teachers.

(iv) He condemned such views as were held by heretics.

(v) He discarded the theory that the cosmic progress had a known beginning.

(vi) He repudiated the theory that God created man or that he came out of the body of some Brahma.

(vii) The existence of the soul He either ignored or denied.

(B) What He Modified

The following are the ideas which He modified:

(i) He accepted the great grand law of cause and effect with its corollaries.

(ii) He repudiated the fatalistic view of life and other equally foolish view that a God pre-destined as to what should happen for man and the world.

(iii) He discarded the theory that all deeds committed in some former birth have the potency to produce suffering, making present activity impotent. He denied the fatalistic view of Karma. He replaced the view of Karma by a much more scientific view of Karma.

(iv) Transmigration (sansara) was replaced by the doctrine of re-birth.

(v) He replaced the doctrine of moksha or salvation of the soul by the doctrine of Nibbana.

The Buddha Sasana is thus an original piece. The little in it which is old is either modified or restated.

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4

RESULTS OF REVOLUTION

I

Buddhism was a Revolution. It was as great a Revolution as the French Revolution. Though it began as a Religious revolution, it became more than Religious revolution. It became a Social and Political Revolution to be able to realize how profound was the character of this Revolution, it is necessary to know the state of the society before the revolution began its course. To use the language of the French Revolution, it is necessary to have a picture of the ancient regime of India[1]

"There are three things[2] against which Buddha carried on a great campaign.

He repudiated the authority of the Vedas.

Secondly, he denounced the Yadna as a form of religion."

"Thirdly, Buddha denounced the caste system. The Caste System in its present form was not then existing. The bar against inter-dining and inter-marriage had not then become operative. Things were flexible and not rigid as they are now. But the principle of inequality which is the basis of the caste system had become well established and it was against this principle that Buddha carried on a determined and a bitter fight. How strongly was he opposed to the pretensions of the Brahmins for superiority over the other classes and how convincing were the grounds of his opposition are to be found in many of his dialogues.

"In the matter of his opposition to Caste,[3] Buddha practised what he preached. He did what the Aryan Society refused to do. In the Aryan Society the Shudra or low caste man could never become a Brahman. But Buddha not only preached against caste but admitted the Shudra and low caste to the

rank of a Bhikkhu who held the same rank in Buddhism as the Brahman did in Brahmanism.

In the first place, as regards his own order. Over which alone he had complete control, he ignores completely and absolutely all advantages or disadvantages arising from birth, occupation and social status and sweeping away all barriers and disabilities arising from the arbitrary rules of mere ceremonial or social impurity.

One of the most distinguished members of his Order, the very one of them who was referred to as the chief authority after Gotama himself, on the rules of the Order, was Upali, who had formerly been a barber, one of the despised occupations. So Sunita, one of the brethren whose verses are chosen for insertion in the Thera Gatha, was a Pukkusa, one of the low tribes. Sati, the propounder of a deadly heresy, was of the sons of the fisher folk, afterwards a low caste, and even then an occupation, on account of its cruelty, particularly abhorred. Nanda was a cowherd. The two Panthakas were born out of wedlock to a girl of good family through intercourse with a slave (so that by the rule laid down in Manu 31, they were actually outcasts). Kapa was the daughter of a deer-stalker. Punna and Punnika had been slave girls. Sumangalamata was daughter and wife to workers in rushes, and Subha was the daughter of a smith. More instances could doubtless be quoted and others will become known when more texts are published.

It does not show much historical insight to sneer at the numbers as small, and to suggest that the supposed enlightenment or liberality was mere pretence. The facts speak for themselves: and the percentage of low-born members of the Order was probably in fair proportion to the percentage of persons belonging to the despised jatis and sippas as compared with the rest of the population. Thus of the Theris mentioned in the Theri Gatha we know the social position of sixty, of whom five are mentioned above—that is. 8½ per cent of the whole number were base-born. It is most likely that this is just about the proportion which persons in similar social rank bore to the rest of the population.

Just as Buddha levelled up the position of the Shudras and

the low caste men by admitting them to the highest rank namely that of Bhikkhus, he also levelled up the position of women. In the Aryan Society women were placed on the same position as the Shudras and in all Aryan literature women and Shudras are spoken of together as persons belonging to the same status. Both of them were denied the right to take *Sanyas*. as Sanyas was the only way open to salvation. Women and Shudras were beyond salvation. Buddha broke this Aryan rule in the case of women as he did in the case of the Shudras. Just as a Shudra could become a Bhikkhu so a woman could become a nun. This was taking her to the highest status then conceivable in the eyes of the Aryan Society.

Another issue on which Buddha fought against the leaders of the Aryan Society was the issue of the Ethics of teachers and teaching. The leaders of the Aryan Society held the view that learning and education was the privilege of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas. The Shudras were not entitled to education. They insisted that it would be danger to social order if they taught women or any males not twice-born. Buddha repudiated this Aryan doctrine. As pointed out by Rhys Davids on this question is "That everyone should be allowed to learn: that everyone, having certain abilities, should be allowed to teach: and that, if he does teach, he should teach all to all; keeping nothing back, shutting no one out."

II[4]

The Religion of the Buddha is morality. It is imbedded in religion. Buddhist religion is nothing if not morality. It is true that in Buddhism there is no God. In place of God there is to morality. What God is to other religions, morality is Buddhism.

It is very seldom recognised that he propounded a most revolutionary meaning of the word *Dhamma*. The Vedic meaning of the word *Dhamma* did not connote morality in any sense of the word. The Dharma as enunciated by the Brahmins and as propounded in the Purvamimansa of Jaimini meant nothing more than the performances of certain Karmas or, to use the terminology of the Roman religion, observances. Dharma to the Brahmins meant keeping up observances i.e., Yajna and Yagas and sacrifices to Gods. This was the essence

of the Brahmanic or Vedic Religion. It had nothing to do with morality.

The word Dhamma as used by the Buddha, had nothing to do with rituals or observances. In fact he repudiated the Yagas and Yajnas as being essence of religion. In place of Karma he substituted morality as the essence of Dhamma. Although the word Dhamma was used both by the Brahmanic teachers as well as by the Buddha, the content of both is radically and fundamentally different. In fact, it might be stated that the Buddha was the first teacher in the world who made morality the essence and foundation of religion.

This is one point of contrast between Hinduism and Buddhism. The second point of contrast lies in the fact that the social gospel of Hinduism is in-equality. For the doctrine of Chaturvarna is the concrete embodiment of the social gospel of inequality.

On the other hand Buddha stood for equality. He was the greatest opponent of Chaturvana. He not only preached against it, fought against it and did every thing to uproot it. According to Hinduism neither a Shudra nor a woman could become a teacher of religion nor could they take *Sanyasa* and reach God. Buddha on the other hand admitted Shudras to the Bhikshu Sangha. He also permitted women to become Bhikshunis. Why did he do so? Few people seem to realise the importance of this step. The answer is that Buddha wanted to take concrete steps to destroy the gospel of inequality. Hinduism had to make many changes in its doctrines as a result of an attack made by Buddha. It gave up *Himsa*. It was prepared to give up the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas.

On the point of Chaturvarna neither side was prepared to yield. Buddha was not prepared to give up his opposition to the doctrine of Chaturvarna. That is the reason why Brahmanism has so much more hatred and antagonism against Buddhism than it has against Jainism. Hinduism had to recognize the force of the Buddha's arguments against Chaturvarna. But instead of yielding to its logic Hinduism developed a new philosophic justification for Chaturvarna.

This new philosophic justification is to be found in the Bhagwat Geeta. Nobody is able to say for certain what the

Bhagwat Geeta teaches. But this much is beyond question that the Bhagwat Geeta upholds the doctrine of Chaturvarna. In fact it appears that this was the main purpose for which it was written. And how does the Bhagwat Geeta justify it? Krishna says that he as God created the system of Chaturvarna and he constructed it on the basis of the theory of *Guna-karma*—which means that he prescribed the status and occupation of every individual in accordance with his inborn *gunas* (or qualities).

Two things are clear. One is that this theory is new. The old theory was different. According to the old theory the foundation of Chaturvarna was the authority of the Vedas. As the Vedas were infallible so was the system of Chaturvarna on which it rested. The attack of the Buddha on the infallibility of the Vedas had destroyed the validity of this old foundation of Chaturvarna.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Dr. Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, 1957, p.188,
2. Ibid., p. 204.
3. Ibid., pp. 220-222.
4. Dr. Ambedkar's article "The Buddha and the Future of His Religion", The *Maha Bodi Journal*, Calcutta, April-May 1950. Cf. Dr. Ambedkar On Buddhism, Edited: D.C. Ahir, Bombay, 1982, pp. 69-72.

5

THE BIRTH OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION

I*

Speaking about India, Prof. Bloomfield opens his lectures on the Religion of the Veda by reminding his audience that "India is the land of religions in more than one sense. It has produced out of its own resources, a number of distinctive systems and sects....

In another sense India is a land of religions. Nowhere else is the texture of life so much impregnated with religious convictions and practices....."[1]

These observations contain profound truth. He would have given utterance to truth far more profound and arresting if he had said that India is a land of warring religions. For indeed there is no country in which Religion has played so great a part in its history as it has in the history of India. The history of India is nothing but a history of a mortal conflict between—Buddhism and Brahmanism. So neglected is this truth that no one will be found to give it his ready acceptance. Indeed there may not be wanting persons who would repudiate any such suggestion.

Let me therefore briefly recount the salient facts of Indian history. For it is important that everyone who was able to understand the history of India must know that it is nothing but the history of the struggle for supremacy between Brahmanism and Buddhism.

The history of India is said to begin with the Aryans who invaded India, made it their home and established their culture.

* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 266-269.

Whatever may be the virtues of the Aryans, their culture, their religion and their social system, we know very little about their political history. Indeed notwithstanding the superiority that is claimed for the Aryans as against the Non-Aryans, the Aryans have left very little their political achievements for history to speak of. The political history of India begins with the rise of a non-Aryan people called Nagas, who were a powerful people, whom the Aryans were unable to conquer, with whom the Aryans had to make peace, and whom the Aryans were compelled to recognize as their equals. Whatever fame and glory India achieved in ancient times in the political field, the credit for it goes entirely to the Non-Aryan Nagas. It is they who made India great and glorious in the annals of the world.

The first land mark in India's political history is the emergence of the Kingdom of Magadha in Bihar in the year 642 B.C. The founder of this kingdom of Magadha is known by the name of Sisunag[2] and belonged to the non-Aryan race of Nagas.

From the small beginning made by Sisunag, this Kingdom of Magadha grew in its extent under the capable rulers of this Sisunag dynasty. Under Bimbisara the fifth ruler of this dynasty the kingdom grew into an Empire and came to be known as the Empire of Magadha. The Sisunag dynasty continued to rule the kingdom till 413 B.C. In that year the reigning Emperor of the Sisunag Dynasty Mahananda was killed by an adventurer called Nanda. Nanda usurped the throne of Magadha and founded the Nanda Dynasty. This Nanda Dynasty ruled over the Empire of Magadha upto 322 B.C. The last Nanda king was deposed by Chandragupta who founded the Maurya Dynasty. Chandraguta was related[3] to the family of the last ruling emperor of the Sisunag Dynasty so that it may be said that the revolution effected by Chandragupta was really a restoration of the Naga Empire of Magadha.

The Mauryas by their conquests enormously extended the boundaries of this Empire of Magadha which they inherited. So vast became the growth of this Empire under Ashoka, the Empire began to be known by another name. It was called the Maurya Empire or the Empire of Ashoka, the First Buddhist

Emperor of India (273-232 BC). Under Ashoka, Buddhism did not remain as one of the many diverse religions then in vogue. Ashoka made it the religion of the state. This of course was the greatest blow to Brahmanism. The Brahmins lost all state patronage and were neglected to a secondary and subsidiary position in the Empire of Ashoka. Indeed it may be said to have been suppressed for the simple reason that Ashoka prohibited all animal sacrifices which constituted the very essence of Brahmanic Religion. The Brahmins had not only lost state patronage but they lost their occupation which mainly consisted in performing sacrifices for a fee which often times was very substantial and which constituted their chief source of living. The Brahmins therefore lived as the suppressed and Depressed Classes[4] for nearly 140 years during which the Maurya Empire lasted. A rebellion against the Buddhist state was the only way of escape left to the suffering Brahmins and there is special reason why Pushyamitra should raise the banner of revolt against the rule of the Mauryas. Pushyamitra was a Sung by Gotra. The Sungas were Samvedi Brahmins,[5] who believed in animal sacrifices and soma sacrifices. The Sungas were therefore quite naturally smarting under the prohibition on animal sacrifices throughout the Maurya Empire proclaimed in the very Rock Edict by Ashoka. No wonder if Pushyamitra who as a Samvedi Brahmin was the first to conceive the passion to end the degradation of the Brahmins by destroying the Buddhist state which was the cause of it and to free them to practise their Brahmanic religion.

That the object of the Regicide by Pushyamitra was to destroy Buddhism as a state religion and to make the Brahmins the sovereign rulers of India so that with the political power of the state behind it Brahmanism may triumph over Buddhism is borne out by two other circumstances.

The first circumstance relates to the conduct of Pushyamitra himself.

There is evidence that Pushyamitra after he ascended the throne performed the Ashvamedha Yajna or the horse sacrifice, the vedic rite which could only be performed by a paramount sovereign. As Vincent Smith observes:

"The exaggerated regard for the sanctity of animal life,

which was one of the most cherished features of Buddhism, and the motive of Ashoka's most characteristic legislation, had necessarily involved the prohibition of bloody sacrifices, which are essential to certain forms of Brahmanical worship, and were believed by the orthodox to possess the highest saving efficacy. The memorable horse sacrifices of Pushyamitra marked an early stage in the Brahmanical reaction, which was fully developed five centuries later in the time of Samudragupta and his successors".

Then there is evidence that Pushyamitra after his accession launched a violent and virulent campaign of persecution against Buddhists and Buddhism.

How pitiless was the persecution of Buddhism by Pushyamitra can be gauged from the Proclamation which he issued against the Buddhist monks. By this proclamation Pushyamitra set a price of 100 gold pieces on the head of every Buddhist monk.[6]

Dr. Haraprasad Shastri speaking about the persecution of Buddhists under Pushyamitra says[7]:

> "The condition of the Buddhists under the imperial sway of the Sungas, orthodox and bigoted, can be more easily imagined than described. From Chinese authorities it is known that many Buddhists still do not pronounce the name of Pushyamitra without a curse."

II

If the Revolution of Pushyamitra was a purely political revolution there was no need for him to have launched a campaign of persecution against Buddhism which was not very different to the campaign of persecution launched by the Mahamud of Gazni against Hinduism. This is one piece of circumstantial evidence which proves that the aim of Pushyamitra was to overthrow Buddhism and establish Brahmanism in its place.

Another piece of evidence which shows that the origin and purpose of the revolution by Pushyamitra against the Mauryas was to destroy Buddhism and establish Brahmanism is

evidenced by the promulgation of Manu Smriti as a code of laws."*

"We must therefore begin with the recognition of the fact: Pushyamitra's revolution was a political revolution engineered by the Brahmins to overthrow Buddhism."**

"That the new regime of Pushyamitra was anti-Buddhist is betrayed by the open provisions enacted in the Manu Smriti against the Buddhists and Buddhism. Note the following provisions in Manu Smriti:-

IX. 225. ..... Men who abide in heresy .... the king should banish from his realm.

IX. 226. "These robbers in disguise, living in the king's realm constantly injure the worthy subject by the performance of their misdeeds.

V. 89.Libations of water shall not be offered to (the souls of) those who (neglect the prescribed rites and may be said to) have been born in vain, to those born in consequence of an illegal mixture of the castes, to those who are ascetics (of heretical sects) and to those who have committed suicide.

V. 90. (Libations of water shall not be offered to the souls of) women who have joined a heretical sect....

IV. 30. Let him (the householder) not honour, even by a greeting heretics... logicians, (arguing against the Veda).

XII. 95. All those traditions and all those despicable systems of Philosophy, which are not based on the Veda produce no reward after death, for they are declared to be founded on Darkness.

XII. 96. All those (doctrines), differing from the (Veda), which spring up and (soon) perish, are worthless and false, because of modern date.

Who are the heretics to whom Manu refers and whom he wants the new king to banish from his realm and householder

* Dr. Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 269-270.
** Ibid., p. 275.

not to honour in life as well as after death? What is this worthless philosophy of modern date, differing from the Vedas, based on darkness and bound to perish? There can be no doubt that the heretic of Manu is the Buddhist and the worthless philosophy of modern date differing from the Vedas is Buddhism. Kalluck Bhutt another commentator on Manu Smriti expressly states that the references to heretics in these Shlokas in Manu are to the Buddhists and Buddhism.

The third circumstance is the position assigned to the Brahmins in the Manu Smriti. Note the following provisions in Manu:-

I. 93. As the Brahmana sprang from (Brahma's) mouth, as he was the first born, and as he possesses the Veda, he is by right the lord of this whole creation.

I. 96. Of created beings the most excellent are said to be those which are animated; of the animated, those which subsist by intelligence; of the intelligent, mankind; and of men, the Brahmans.

I. 100. Whatever exists in the world is the property of the Bramhans; on account of the excellence of his origin the Brahmana is, indeed, entitled to it all.

I. 101. The Brahmana eats but his own food, wears but his own apparel, bestows but his own in alms; other mortals subsist through the benevolence of the Brahmana.

X. 3 On account of his pre-eminence, on account of the superiority of his origin, on account of his observance of (particular) restrictive rules, and on account of his particular sanctification, the Brahmana is the lord of (all) castes.

XI. 35. The Brahmana is declared to be the creator of the world, the punisher, the teacher, and hence a benefactor of all created beings; to him let no man say anything unpropitious, nor use any harsh words.

Manu warns the King against displeasing the Brahmans in the following terms:-

IX. 313. Let him (the King) not, though fallen unto the deepest distress, provoke Brahmans to anger; for they,

when angered, could instantly destroy him together with his army and his vehicles. Manu further proclaims.

XI. 31. A Brahmana who knows the law need not bring any (offence) to the notice of the king; by his own power alone he can punish those men who injure him.

XI 32. His own power is greater than the power of the king: The Brahmana, therefore, may punish his foes by his own power alone.

This deification of the Brahmins, placing them even above the King would have been impossible unless the King himself was a Brahmin and in sympathy with the view expressed by Manu. Pushyamitra and his successors could not have tolerated theAse exaggerated claims of the Brahmins unless they themselves were Brahmins interested in the establishment of Brahmanism. Indeed it is quite possible that the Manu Smriti was composed at the command of Pushyamitra himself and forms the book of the philosophy of Brahmanism.

Taking all these facts into considerations there can remain no doubt; the one and only object of Pushyamitra's revolution was to destroy Buddhism and re-establish Brahmanism.*

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The Religion of the Veda p. 1.
2. His name is also spelt as Sisunak.
3. Mr. Hari Krishna Deb; quoted by Smith, Early History of India (1924) p. 44 F.N. I.
4. The inferiority complex of the Brahmins under the Maurya Rule becomes apparent from the privileges asked for them by Manu in the Manu Smriti. This inferiority complex must be due to their depressed condition.
5. See Harprasad Shastri in Buddhistic Studies)Ed. Law) Chapter XXXIV p. 819.
6. Burnouf—L'Introduction a L 'Historic on Buddhisme Indien (2nd. Ed.) p. 388.
7. Buddhistic Studies (Ed. by Law) Chapter XXXIV p. 820.

* Ibid., pp. 271-273.

6

MANU SMRITI: THE GOSPEL OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION*

The Manu Smriti is said to be divine in its origin. It is said to be revealed to man by Manu to whom it was revealed by the Swayambhu (i.e. the Creator). This claim, as will be seen from the reference already made to it, is set out in the Code itself. It is surprizing that nobody has cared to examine the grounds of such a claim. The result is that there is a complete failure to realise the significance, place and position of the Manu Smriti in the history of India. This is true even of the historians of India although the Manu Smriti is a record of the greatest social revolution that Hindu society has undergone. There can however be no doubt that the claim made in the Manu Smriti regarding its authorship is an utter fraud and the beliefs arising out of this false claim are quite untenable.

The name Manu had a great prestige in the ancient history of India and it is with the object to invest the code with this ancient prestige that its authorship was attributed to Manu. That this was a fraud to deceive people is beyond question. The code itself is signed[1] in the family name of Bhrigu as was the ancient custom. "The Text Composed by Bhrigu (entitled) "The Dharma Code of Manu" is the real title of the work. The name Bhrigu is subscribed to the end of every chapter of the Code itself. We have therefore the family name of the author of the Code. His personal name is not disclosed in the Book. All the same it was known to many. The Author of Narada Smriti writing in about the 4th Century A.D. knew the name of the author of the Manu Smriti and gives out the secret. According to Narada it was one Sumati Bhargava who composed the Code

* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3., pp. 270-271, 275-320.

of Manu. Sumati Bhargava is not a legendary name, and must have been historical person for even Medhatithe[2] the great commentator on the Code of Manu held the view that this Manu was 'a certain individual'. Manu therefore is the assumed name of Sumati Bhargava who is the real author of Manu Smriti.

When did this Sumati Bhargava compose this Code? It is not possible to give any precise date for its composition. But quite a precise period during which it was composed can be given. According to scholars whose authority cannot be questioned Sumati Bhargava must have composed the Code which he deliberately called Manu Smriti between 170 B.C. and 150 B.C. Now if one bears in mind the fact that the Brahmanic Revolution by Pushyamitra took place in 185 B.C. there remains no doubt that the code known as Manu Smriti was promulgated by Pushyamitra as embodying the principles of Brahmanic Revolution against the Buddhist state of the Mauryas. That the Manu Smriti forms the Institutes of Brahmanism and are a proof that Pushyamitra Revolution was not a purely personal adventure will be clear to any one who cares to note the following peculiarities relating to the Manu Smriti.

First thing to be noted is that the Manu Smriti is a new Code of law promulgated for the first time during the reign of Pushyamitra. There was a view once prevalent that there existed a code known as the Manava-Dharma-Sutra and that what is known as Manu Smriti is an adaptation of the old Manava Dharma Sutra. This view has been abandoned as there has been no trace of any such work. Two other works existed prior to the present Manu Smriti. One was known as Manava Artha Sastra, or Manava-Raja-Sastra or Manava-Raja-Dharma-Sastra. The other work was known as Manava-Grihya-Sutra. Scholars have compared the Manu Smriti. On important points the provisions of one are not only dissimilar but are in every way contrary to the provisions contained in the other. This is enough to show that Manu Smriti contains the new law of the new regime."

"The curious will naturally ask what did this triumphant Brahmanism do? It is to this question that I will now turn.

The deeds or misdeeds of this triumphant Brahmanism may be catalogued under seven heads. (i) It established the right of the Brahmin to rule and commit regicide. (2) It made the Brahmins a class of privileged persons. (3) It converted the Varna into caste. (4) It brought about a conflict and anti-social feeling between different castes. (5) It degraded the Shudras and the women. (6) It forged the system of graded inequality, and (7) It made legal and rigid the social system which was conventional and flexible.

1. The Right of the Brahmins to Commit Regicide

To begin with the first.

The revolution brought about by Pushyamitra created an initial difficulty in the way of the Brahmins. People could not be easily reconciled to this revolution. The resentment of the public was well expressed by the poet Bana[3] when in referring to this revolution reviles Pushyamitra as being base born and calls his act of regicide as *Anarya*. The act of Pushyamitra was properly described by Bana as *Anarya* i.e., contrary to Aryan law. For on three points the Aryan law at the date of Pushyamitra's revolution was well settled. The then Aryan law declared (1) That Kingship is the right of the Kshatriya only. A Brahmin could never be a king. (2) That no Brahmin shall take to the profession of arms[4] and (3) That rebellion against the King's authority was a sin. Pushyamitra in fostering the rebellion had committed a crime against each of these three laws. He was Brahmin, and although a Brahmin he rebelled against the King, took to the profession of arms and became a King. People were not reconciled to this usurpation which constituted so flagrant a breach of the law that the Brahmins had to regularize the position created by Pushyamitra. This the Brahmins did by taking the bold step of changing the law. This change of law is quite manifest from the Manu Smriti. I will quote the appropriate shlokas from the Code:

> XII. 100. "The post of the Commander-in-Chief of the Kingdom, the very Headship of Government, the complete empire over every one are deserved by the Brahmin."

Here we have one change in the law. This new law declares that the Brahmin has a right to become Senapati (Commander of forces), to conquer a kingdom, and to be the ruler and the Emperor of it.

XI. 31. A Brahmin, who well knows the laws, need not complain to the king of any grievous injury; since, even by his own power, he may chastise those, who injure him.

XI. 32. His (Brahmin's) own power, which depends on himself alone is mightier than the royal power, which depends on other men; by his own might, therefore may a Brahmin coerce his foes.

XI. 261-62. A Brahmin who has killed even the peoples of the three worlds, is completely freed from all sins on reciting three times the Rig, Yajur or Sama.—Veda with the Upanishadas."

Here is the second change in the law. It authorized the Brahmin to kill not only the king but to engage in a general massacre of men if they seek to do injury to his power and position.

VIII. 348. "The twice born man may take arms, when the rightful occupation assigned to each by Dharma is obstructed by force; and when, in some evil time, a disaster has befallen the twice-born classes."

IX. 320. Of a Kshatriya (Military man or king), who raise his arm violently on all occasions against the Brahmins, Brahmin himself shall be the chastiser; since the soldier originally proceeded from the Brahmin."

This is the third legal change. It recognized the right to rebellion and the right to regicide. The new law is very delicately framed. It gives the right of rebellion to three higher classes. But it is also given to the Brahmins singly by way of providing for a situation when the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas may not be prepared to join the Brahmin in bringing about a rebellion. The right of rebellion is well circumscribed. It can be exercised only when the king is guilty of upsetting the occupations assigned by Manu to the different Varnas.

These legal changes were as necessary as they were

revolutionary. Their object was to legalize and regularize the position created by Pushyamitra by killing the last Maurya King. By virtue of these legal changes, a Brahmin could lawfully become a king, could lawfully take arms, could lawfully depose or murder a king who was opposed to Chaturvarna and could lawfully kill any subject that opposed the authority of the Brahmin. Manu gave the Brahmins a right to commit Barthalomeu if it became necessary to safeguard their interests.

In this way Brahmanism established the right of Brahmana to rule and set at rest whatever doubt and dispute there was regarding the same. But that could hardly be enough for the Brahmins as a whole. It may be a matter of pride but not of any advantage. There can be no special virtue in Brahmin rule if the Brahmin was treated as common man along with the Non-Brahmins having the same rights and same duties. Brahmin rule if it is to justify itself, it must do so by conferring special privileges and immunities on the Brahmins as a class. Indeed Pushyamitra's Revolution would have been an ill wind blowing no good if it had not recognized the superior position of the Brahmins and conferred upon them special advantages. Manu was alive to this and accordingly proceeds to create monopolies for Brahmins and grant them certain immunities and privileges as may be seen from the Code.

2. The Brahmins as a Privileged Class

First as to monopolies:

I. 88. To Brahmanas he assigned teaching and studying (the Veda) sacrificing for their own benefit and for others, giving and accepting (of alms).

X. I. Let the three twice-born castes (Varna), discharging their (prescribed) duties, study (the Veda); but among them the Brahmana (alone) shall teach it, not the other two; that is an established rule.

X. 2. The Brahmana must know the means of subsistence (prescribed) by law for all, instruct others, and himself live according to (the law).

X. 3. On account of his pre-eminence, on account of the superiority of his origin, on account of his observance of

(particular) restrictive rules, and on account of his particular sanctification, the Brahmana is the lord of (all) castes (varna).

X. 74. Brahmanas who are intent on the means (of gaining union with) Brahma and firm in (discharging) their duties, shall live by duly performing the following six acts, (which are enumerated) in their (proper) order.

X. 75. Teaching, studying, sacrificing for himself, sacrificing for others, making gifts and receiving them are the six acts (prescribed) for a Brahmana.

X. 76. But among the six acts (ordained) for him three are his means of subsistence, (viz.) sacrificing for others, teaching, and accepting gifts from pure men.

X. 77. (Passing) from the Brahmana to the Kshatriya, three acts (incumbent) (on the former) are forbidden, (viz.) teaching, sacrificing for others, and, thirdly, the acceptance of gifts.

X. 78. The same are likewise forbidden to a Vaishya, that is a settled rule; for Manu, the lord of creatures (Prajapati), has not prescribed them for (men of) those two (castes).

X. 79. To carry arms for striking and for throwing (is prescribed) for Kshatriyas as a means of subsistence; to trade, (to rear) cattle, and agriculture for Vaisyas; but their duties are liberality, the study of the Veda, and the performance of sacrifices.

Here are three things which Manu made the monopoly of the Brahmin: teaching Vedas, performing Sacrifices and receiving gifts.

The following are the immunities that were granted to the Brahmins. They fall into two classes; freedom from taxation and exemption from certain forms of punishment for crimes.

VII. 133. Though dying (with want), a king must not levy a tax on Srotriyas, and no Srotriya residing in his kingdom, must perish from hunger.

VIII. 122. They declare that the wise have prescribed

these fines for perjury, in order to prevent a failure of justice, and in order to restrain injustice.

VIII 123. But a just king shall fine and banish (men of) the three (lower) castes (varna) who have given false evidence, but a Brahmana he shall (only) banish.

VIII. 124. Manu, the son of the Self-existent (Svayambhu), has named ten places on which punishment may be (made to fall) in the cases of the three (lower) castes (varna); but a Brahmana shall depart unhurt (from the country).

VIII. 379. Tonsure (of the head) is ordained for a Brahmana (instead of) capital punishment; but (men of) other castes shall suffer capital punishment.

VIII. 380. Let him never slay a Brahmana, though he may have committed all (possible) crimes; let him banish such an (offender), leaving all his property (to him) and (his body) unhurt.

Thus Manu places the Brahmin above the ordinary penal law for felony. He is to be allowed to leave the country without a wound on him and with all property in proved offences of capital punishment. He is not to suffer forfeiture of fine nor capital punishment. He suffered only banishment which in the words of Hobbes was only a "Change of air" after having committed the most heinous crimes.

Manu gave him also certain privileges.

A judge must be a Brahmin.

VIII 9. But if the king does not personally investigate the suits, then let him appoint a learned Brahmana to try them.

VIII. 10. That (man) shall enter that most excellent court, accompanied by three assessors, and fully consider (all) causes (brought) before the (king), either sitting down or standing. The other privileges were financial

VIII. 37. When a learned Brahmana has found treasure, deposited in former (times), he may take even the whole (of it); for he is master of everything.

VIII. 38. When the king finds treasure of old concealed in the ground, let him give one half to Brahmanas and place the (other) half in his treasury.

IX. 323. But (a king who feels his end drawing nigh) shall bestow all his wealth, accumulated from fines, on Brahmanas, make over his kingdom to his son, and then seek death in battle.

IX. 187. Always to that (relative within three degrees) who is nearest to the (deceased) Sapinda the estate shall belong; afterwards a Sakulya shall be (the heir, then) the spiritual teacher or the pupil.

IX. 188. But on failure of all (heirs) Brahmanas (shall) share the estate, (who are) versed in the three Vedas, pure and self-controlled; thus the law is not violated.

IX. 189. The property of a Brahmana must never be taken by the King, that is a settled rule; but (the property of men) of other castes the king may take on failure of all (heirs).

These are some of the advantages, immunities and privileges which Manu conferred upon the Brahmins. This was a token of a Brahmin having become a king.

Supporters of Brahmanism—so strong is the belief in the excellence of Brahmanism that there are no apologists for it as yet—never fail to point to the disabilities which Manu has imposed upon the Brahmins. Their object in doing so is to show that the ideal placed by Manu before the Brahmin is poverty and service. That Manu has placed certain disabilities upon the Brahmins is a fact. But to conclude from it that Manu's ideal for a Brahmin is poverty and service is a gross and deliberate concoction for which there is no foundation in Manu.

To understand the real purpose which Manu had in imposing these disabilities, two things must be borne in mind. Firstly the place Manu has assigned to the Brahmins in the general scheme of society and secondly the nature of the disabilities. The place assigned by Manu to the Brahmins is enunciated by him in unequivocal terms. The matter being important I must quote again the Verses already quoted.

I. 93. As the Brahmana sprang from (Brahman's) mouth, as he was the first born, and as he possesses the Veda, he is by right the lord of this whole creation.

Consider the nature of the disabilities.

IV. 2. A Brahamana must seek a means of subsistence which either causes no, or at least little pain (to others), and live (by that) except in times of distress.

IV 3. For the purpose of gaining bare subsistence, let him accumulate property by (following those) irreproachable occupations (which are prescribed for) his (caste), without (unduly) fatiguing his body.

VIII. 337. In (a case of) theft the guilt of a Sudra shall be eightfold, that of a Vaishya sixteen fold, that of a Kshatriya two-and-thirty fold.

VIII. 338. That of a Brahmana sixty-four-fold, or quite a hundred-fold or (even) twice four-and-sixty-fold; (each of them) knowing the nature of the offence.

VIII. 383. A Brahmana shall be compelled to pay a fine of one thousand (panas) if he has intercourse with guarded (females of) those two (castes); for (offending with) a (guarded) Sudra female a fine of one thousand (panas) (shall be inflicted) on a Kshatriya or a Vaishya.

VIII. 384. For (intercourse with) an unguarded Kshatriya a fine of five hundred (panas shall fall) on a Vaisya; but (for the same offence) a Kshatriya shall be shaved with the urine (of a donkey) or (pay) the same fine.

VIII. 385. A Brahmana who approaches unguarded females (of the) Kshatriya or Vaisya (castes), or a Sudra female, shall be fined five hundred (panas); but (for intercourse with) a female (of the) lowest (castes), one thousand.

Examining these disabilities against the background furnished by the place assigned to him by Manu, it is obvious that the object of these disabilities was not to make the Brahmin suffer. On the other hand it becomes clear that the object of Manu was to save the Brahmin from falling from the high pinnacle on which he had placed him and incurring the disgrace of the non-Brahmins.

That the object of Manu was not to subject the Brahmins to poverty and destitute is clear from other provisions from Manu-Smriti. In this connection reference should be made to the rule contained in the Manu Smriti regarding the course of conduct a Brahmin should pursue when he is in distress.

X. 80. Among the several occupations the most commendable are, teaching the Veda for a Brahmana, protecting (the people) for a Kshatriya, and trade for a Vaisya.

X. 81. But a Brahmana, unable to subsist by his peculiar occupations just mentioned, may live according to the law applicable to Kshatriyas; for the latter is next to him in rank.

X. 82. If it be asked, 'How shall it be, if he cannot maintain himself by either (of these occupations?' the answer is), he may adopt a Vaisya's mode of life, employing himself in agriculture and rearing cattle.

X. 83. But a Brahmana, or a Kshatriya, living by a Vaisya's mode of subsistence, shall carefully avoid (the pursuit of) agriculture, (which causes) injury to many beings and depends on others.

X. 84. (Some) declare that agriculture is something excellent, (but) that means of subsistence is blamed by the virtuous; (for) the wooden (implement) with iron point injures the earth and (the beings) living in the earth.

X. 85. But he who, through a want of means of subsistence, gives up the strictness with respect to his duties, may sell, in order to increase his wealth, the commodities sold by Vaisyas, making (however) the (following) exceptions.

It will be seen that the disabilities imposed upon a Brahmin last as long as he is prospering by the occupations which belong to him as of right. As soon as he is in distress and his disabilities vanish, he is free to do anything that he likes to do in addition to the occupations reserved to him and without ceasing to be a Brahmin. Further whether he is in distress or not is a matter which is left to the Brahmin to be decided in his own discretion. There is therefore no bar to prevent even a

prosperous Brahmin to supplement his earnings by following any of the professions open to him in distress by satisfying his conscience.

There are other provisions in Manu Smriti intended to materially benefit the Brahmanas. They are *Dakshina* and *Dana*. Dakshina is the fee which the Brahmin is entitled to charge when he is called to perform a religious ceremony. Brahmanism is full of rites and ceremonies. It is not very difficult to imagine how great must this source of income be to every Brahmin. There was no chance of a priest being cheated of his fees. The religious sense attached to Dakshina was a sufficient sanction for regular payment. But Manu wanted to give the Brahmins the right to recover his fees.

XI. 38. A Brahmana who, though wealthy, does not give, as fee for the performance of an Agnyadheya, a horse sacred to Prajapati, becomes (equal to one) who has not kindled the sacred fires.

XI. 39. Let him who has faith and controls his senses, perform other meritorious acts, but let him on no account offer sacrifices at which he gives smaller fees (than those prescribed).

XI. 40. The organs (of sense and action), honour, (bliss in) heaven, longevity, fame, offspring, and cattle are destroyed by a sacrifice at which (too) small sacrificial fees are given; hence a man of small means should not offer a (Srauta) sacrifice.

He even goes to the length of excusing a Brahmin by declaring that anything done by him to recover his fees shall not be an offence under the law.

VIII. 349. In their own defence, in a strife for the fees of officiating priests and in order to protect women and Brahmanas; he who (under such circumstances kills in the cause of right, commits no sin.

But it is the provision of Dana which makes a fruitful source of income to the Brahmins. Manu exhorts the King to make *Dana* to Brahmins.

VII. 79. A King shall offer various (Srauta) sacrifices at

which liberal fees (are distributed), and in order to acquire merit, he shall give to Brahmanas enjoyments and wealth.

VII. 82. Let him honour those Brahmanas who have returned from their teacher's house (after studying the Veda); for that (money which is given to Brahmanas is declared to be an imperishable treasure for kings.

VII. 83. Neither thieves nor foes can take it, nor can it be lost; hence an imperishable store must be deposited by kings with Brahmanas.

XI. 4. But a king shall bestow, as is proper, jewels of all sorts, and presents for the sake of sacrifices on Brahmanas learned in the Vedas.

This admonition by Manu to the King did not remain a mere hope for the Brahmin. For as history shows that this exhortation was fully exploited by the Brahmins as the number of *dana patras* discovered by Archaeologists indicate. It is astounding how the kings were befooled by the Brahmins to transfer village after village to crafty, lazy and indolent Brahmins. Indeed a large part of the wealth of the present day Brahmins lies in this swindle practised by wily Brahmins upon pious but foolish kings. Manu was not content to let the Brahmin prey upon the King for *dana*. He also allowed the Brahmin to prey upon the public in the matter of *dana*. This Manu does in three different ways. In the first place he exhorts people to make gifts as a part of the duty owned by the pious to himself at the same time pointing out that the highest dana to a Brahmin.:

VII. 85. A gift to one who is not a Brahmana (yields) the ordinary (reward); a gift to one who calls himself a Brahmana, a double (reward); a gift to a well-read Brahmana, a hundred thousandfold (reward); (a gift) to one who knows the Veda and the Angas (Vedaparanga), (a reward) without end.

VII. 86. For according to the particular qualities of the recipient and according to the faith (of the giver) a small or a great reward will be obtained for a gift in the next world.

In the next place Manu declares that in certain circumstances *dana* to a Brahmin is compulsory.

XI. 1. Him who wishes (to marry for the sake of having) offspring, him who wishes to perform a sacrifice, a traveller, him who has given away all his property, him who begs for the sake of his teacher, his father, or his mother, a student of the Veda, and a sick man.

XI. 2 These nine Brahmanas one should consider as Snatakas, begging in order to fulfill the sacred law; to such poor men gifts must be given in proportion to their learning.

XI. 3. To these most excellent among the twice-born, food and presents (of money) must be given; it is declared that food must be given to others outside the sacrificial enclosure.

XI. 6. One should give, according to one's ability, wealth to Brahmanas learned in the Vedas and living alone; (thus) one obtains after death heavenly bliss.

The third method adopted by Manu to make the rule of Dana become a source of secure and steady income is beyond question the most ingenuous one. Manu linked up *dana* with penance. In the Scheme of Manu, an improper act may be a sin although not an offence or it may be both a sin as well as an offence. As a sin its punishment is a matter for canonical law. As an offence its punishment is a matter of secular law. As sin, the improper act is called Pataka and the punishment for it is called Penance. In the Scheme of Manu every Pataka must be expunged by the performance of a penance.

XI. 44. A man who omits a prescribed act, or performs a blamable act, or cleaves to sensual enjoyments, must perform a penance.

XI. 45. (All) sages prescribe a penance for a sin unintentionally committed; some declare, on the evidence of the revealed texts, (that it may be performed) even for an intentional (offences).

XI. 46. A sin unintentionally committed is expiated by the recitation of Vedic texts, but that which (men) in their folly commit intentionally, by various (special) penances.

XI. 53. Thus in consequence of a remnant of (the guilt of former) crimes, are born idiots, dumb, blind, deaf and deformed men, who are (all) despised by the virtuous.

XI. 54. Penances, therefore, must always be performed for the sake of purification, because those whose sins have not been expiated, are born (again) with disgraceful marks.

The penances prescribed by Manu are many and the curious may refer to the Manu Smriti itself for a knowledge of what they are. What is worthy of note is these penances are calculated to materially benefit the Brahmin. Some penances take the form of a simple *dana* to the Brahmin. Others prescribe the performance of some religious rites. But as religious rites cannot be performed by anybody except by a Brahmin and that the performance of religious rite requires the payment of fees the Brahmin alone can be the beneficiary of the *dana* system.

It is therefore absurd to suggest that Manu wanted to place before the Brahmins the ideal of humility, poverty and service. The Brahmins certainly did not understand Manu that way. Indeed they believed that they were made a privileged class. Not only they believed in it but they sought to extend their privileges in other directions a matter which will be discussed later on. They were perfectly justified, in their view. Manu called the Brahmins the 'lords of the earth' and he framed (the law) with such care that they shall remain so.

Having made full provision for Brahmin Rule and Brahmin dominance Manu next launches out to transform society to suit his purposes.

3. The Varna Converted into Caste

The transformation of Varna into Caste is the most stupendous and selfish task in which Brahmanism after its triumph became primarily engaged. We have no explicit record of the steps that Brahmanism took to bring about this change. On the contrary we have a lot of confused thinking on the relation between Varna and Caste. Some think that Varna and Caste are the same. Those who think that they are different seem to believe that Varna became caste when prohibitions on intermarriage became part of the social order. All this, of course, is erroneous and the error is due to the fact that Manu in transforming the Varna into Caste has nowhere explained his ends and how his means are related to those ends. Oscar Wilde has said that to be intelligible is to be found out. Manu

did not wish to be found out. He is therefore silent about his ends and means, leaving people to imagine them. For Hindus the subject is important beyond measure. An attempt at clarification is absolutely essential so that the confusion due to different people imagining differently the design of Manu may be removed and light thrown on the way how Brahmanism proceeded to give a wrong and pernicious turn to the original idea of Varna as the basis of society.

As I said Manu's ways are silent and subterranean and we cannot give the detailed and chronological history of this conversion of Varna into Caste. But fortunately there are landmarks which are clear enough to indicate how the change was brought about.

Before proceeding to describe how this change was brought about let me clear the confusion between Varna and Caste. This can best be done by noting the similarities and differences between the two. Varna and Caste are identical in their *de jure* connotation. Both connote status and occupation. Status and occupation are the two concepts which are implied both in the notion Varna as well as in the notion of Caste. Varna and Caste however differ in one important particular. Varna is not hereditary either in status or occupation. On the other hand Caste implies a system in which status and occupation are hereditary and descend from father to son.

When I say that Brahmanism converted Varna into Caste what I mean is that it made status and occupation hereditary.

How was this transformation effected? As I said there are no foot-prints left of the steps taken by Brahmanism to accomplish this change but there are landmarks which serve to give us a clear view of how the deed came to be done.

The change was accomplished by stages. In the transformation of Varna into Caste three stages are quite well marked. The first stage was the stage in which the duration of Varna i.e. of status and occupation of a person was for a prescribed period of time only. The second stage was a stage in which the status and occupation involved the Varna of a person ensured during lifetime only. The third stage was a stage in which the status and occupation of the Varna became hereditary.

To use legal language the Estate conferred by Varna was at the beginning an Estate for a term only. Thereafter it became a life Estate and finally it became an Estate of inheritance which is tantamount to saying that Varna became Caste. That these are the stages by which Varna was converted into Caste seems to have ample support from tradition as recorded in the religious literature.[5] There is no reason why this tradition should not be accepted as embodying some thing that is quite genuine. According to this tradition, the task of determining Varna of a person was effected by a body of officers called Manu and Sapta Rishis. From the mass of people Manu selected those who were fit to be Kshatriyas and Vaishyas and the Sapta Rishis selected those who were fit to be Brahmanas. After this selection was made by Manu and Sapta Rishis for being Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, the rest that were not selected were called Shudras. The Varna arrangement so determined lasts for one *Yug* i.e., a period of four years. Every fourth year a new body of officers known by the same designation Manu and Sapta Rishi were appointed for making a new selection. It happened that last time some of those who were left to be fit only for being Shudras were selected for being Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas while some of those who were, elected last time for being Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were left as being fit only of being Shudras. Thus the personnel of the Varna changed. It was a sort of a periodical shuffling and selection of men to take up according to their mental and physical aptitudes and occupations which were essential to the life of the community. The time when the reshuffling of the Varnas took place was called *Manwantar* which etymologically means change of Varna made by Manu. The word Manwantar also means the period for which the Varna of an individual was fixed. The word Manwantar is very rich in its contents and expresses the essential elements of the Varna system which were two. First it shows that Varna was determined by an independent body of people called Manu and Saptarishi. Secondly it shows that the Varna was for a period after which a change was made by Manu[6] According to ancient tradition as embodied in the Puranas the period for which the Varna of a person was fixed by Manu and Saptarishi was a period of four years and was called *Yug*. At the end of the period of four years there occurred the Manwantar whereby every fourth year the

list was revised. Under the revision some changed their old Varna, some retained it, some lost it and some gained it.[7]

The original system seems to have in contemplation the determination of the Varna of adults. It was not based on prior training or close scrutiny of bias and aptitude. Manu and Saptarishi was a sort of a Board of Interview which determined the Varna of a person from how he struck them at the interview. The determination of the Varna was done in a rough and tumble manner. This system seems to have gone into abeyance. A new system grew up in its place. It was known as the Gurukul system. The Gurukul was a school maintained by a Guru (teacher) also called Acharya (learned man). All children went to this Gurukul for their education. The period of education extended for twelve years. The child while at Gurukul was known as Bramhachari. After the period of education was over there was the Upanayan ceremony performed at the Gurukul by the Acharya. The Upanayan ceremony was the most important ceremony. It was a ceremony at which the Acharya determined the Varna of the student and sent him out in the world to perform the duties of that Varna. Upanayan by the Acharyas was the new method of determining Varna which came into vogue in place of method of determination by Manu and Saptarishi. The new method was undoubtedly superior to the old method. It retained the true feature of the old method namely that the Varna should be determined by a disinterested and independent body. But it added a new feature namely training as a pre-requisite for assignment of Varna. On the ground that training alone developes individual in the make up of a person and the only safe way to determine the Varna of a person is to know his individuality, the addition of this new feature was undoubtedly a great improvement.

With the introduction of the Acharya Gurukul system, the duration of the Varna came to be altered. Varna instead of being Varna for a period became Varna for life. But it was not hereditary.

Evidently Brahmanism was dissatisfied with this system. The reason for dissatisfaction was quite obvious. Under the system as prevalent there was every chance of the Acharya declaring the child of a Brahmin as fit only to be a Shudra. Brahmanism was naturally most anxious to avoid this result.

It wanted the Varna to be hereditary. Only by making the Varna hereditary could it save the children of the Brahmins from being declared Shudra. To achieve this Brahmanism proceeded in the most audacious manner one can think of.

4. Conflict and Anti-social Feelings

Brahmanism made three most radical changes in the system of determing the Varna of the child. In the first place the system of Gurukul as the place where training to the child was given and its Varna was determined by the Guru at the end of the period of training was abolished. Manu is quite aware of the Gurukul and refers to *Guruvyas*[8] i.e. training and residence in the Gurukul under the Guru. But does not refer to it at all in connection with the Upanayan. He abolishes the Guru as an authority competent to perform Upanayan by omitting to make even the remotest reference to him in connection with Upanayan. In place of the Guru, Manu allows the Upanayan of the child to be performed by its father at home.[9] Secondly Upanayan was made into a Sanskara i.e., a sacrament. In olden times Upanayan was like a convocation ceremony[10] held by the Guru to confer degrees obtained by students in his Gurukul in which certificates of proficiency in the duties of a particular Varna were granted. In Manu's law that Upanayan was a complete change in the meaning and purpose of this most important institution. Thirdly the relation of training to Upanayan was totally reversed. In the olden system training came before Upanayan. Under the Brahmanism Upanayan came before training. Manu directs that a child be sent to the Guru for training but that is after Upanayan i.e., after[11] his Varna is determined by his father.

The principal change made by Brahmanism was the transfer of authority from the Guru to the father in the matter of performing Upanayan. The result was that the father having the right to perform the Upanayan of his child gave his own Varna to the child and thus made it hereditary. It is by divesting the Guru of his authority to determine the Varna and vesting it in the father that Brahmanism ultimately converted Varna into Caste.

Such is the story of the transformation of Varna into Caste. The story of the transition from one to the other is of course

reconstructed. For the reasons already given it may not be quite as accurate as one would wish it to be in all its details. But I have no doubt that the stages and the ways by which Varna ceased to exist and caste came into being must be some such as have been suggested in the foregoing discussion of the subject.

What object Brahmanism could have had in converting Varna into caste it is not difficult to imagine. The object was to make the high status enjoyed by the Brahmins from ancient times the privilege of every Brahmin and his progeny without reference to merits or to qualifications. To put it differently the object was to elevate and ennoble every Brahmin, however mean and worthless he may be, to the high status occupied by some of them on account of the virtue. It was an attempt to ennoble the whole of the Brahmin Community without exception.

That this was the object of Brahmanism is clear from Manu's ordinances. Manu knew that making Varna hereditary, the most ignorant Brahmin[12] will be elevated to the status occupied by the most learned Brahmin. He feared that the former may not be respected as much as the most learned, which was the object of this attempt at the ennoblement of the whole class of Brahmins. Manu is very much concerned about the ignorant Brahmin—a new thing—and warns people against being disrespectful to an ignorant and mean Brahmin.

> IX. 317. A Brahmin, whether learned or ignorant, is a powerful divinity; even as fire is powerful divinity, whether consecrated or popular.
>
> IX 319. Thus although Brahmins employ themselves in all sorts of mean occupations, they must invariably be honoured; for they are something transcendently divine.

Such a warning was unnecessary if the object was to ennoble the whole Brahmin class. Here is a case where vice refuses to pay to virtue even the homage of hypocrisy. Can there be greater moral degeneracy than what is shown by Manu in insisting upon the worship of the Brahmin even if he is mean and ignorant?

So much for the object of change from Varna to Caste. What have been the consequences of this change?

From the spiritual point of view the consequences have been too harmful to be contemplated with equanimity. The harm done may perhaps be better realized by comparing the position of the Brahmin as a priest resulting from the law of Manu with that of the law of the clergy under the Church of England. There the clergy is subject to the criminal law as every citizen is. But in addition to that he is always subject to Church Descipline Act. Under the Criminal Law he would be punished if he officiated as a clergy without being qualified for it. Under the Church Discipline Act he would be liable to be disqualified as a clergy for conduct which would be deemed to be morally wrong although it did not amount to a crime. This double check on the clergy is held justifiable because learning and morality are deemed to be quite essential for the profession of the clergy who are supposed to administer to the spiritual needs of the people. Under Brahmanism the Brahmin who alone can be the clergy need not possess learning or morality. Yet he is in sole charge of the spiritual affairs of the people!! On the value of a creed which permits this, comment is unneceesary.

From the secular point of view, the consequences of this transformation of Varna into Caste has to introduce a most pernicious mentality among the Hindus. It is to disregard merit and have regard only to birth. If one is descended from the high he has respect although he may be utterly devoid of merit or worth. One who is of high birth will be superior to the one who is of low birth although the latter may be superior to the former in point of worth. Under Brahmanism it is birth that always wins, whether it is against birth or against worth Merit by itself can win no meads. This is entirely due to the dissociation of merits from status which is the work of Brahmanism. Nothing could be better calculated to produce an unprogressive society which sacrifices the rights of intelligence on the altar of aristocratic privilege.

Now the third deed in the catalogue of deeds done by Brahmanism after its triumph over Buddhism. It was to separate the Brahmins from the rest of the Non-Brahmin population and to sever the different social strata of the Non-Brahmin population.

Pushyamitra's Brahmanic Revolution was undertaken for the purposes of restoring the ancient social system of Chaturvarna which under the Buddhist regime was put into the melting pot. But when Brahmanism triumphed over Buddhism it did not content itself with merely restoring Chaturvarna as it was in its original form. The system of Chaturvarna of the Pre-Buddhist days was a flexible system and was an open system. This was because the Varna system had no connection with the marriage system. While Chaturvarna recognized the existence of four different classes, it did not prohibit inter-marriage between them. A male of one Varna could lawfully marry a female of another Varna. There are numerous illustrations in support of this view. I give below some instances which refer to well-known and respectable individuals which have acquired a name and fame in the sacred lore of the Hindus.

Husband	His Varna	Wife	Her Varna
1. Shantanu	Kshatriya	Ganga	Shudra Anamik
2. Shantanu	Kshatriya	Matsyagandha	Shudra Fisherwoman
3. Parashara	Brahmin	Matsyagandha	Shudra Fisherwoman
4. Vishwamitra	Kshatriya	Menaka	Apsara
5. Yayati	Kshatriya	Devayani	Brahmin
6. Yayati	Kshatriya	Sharmishta	Asuri—Non-Aryan
7. Jaratkaru	Brahmin	Jaratkari	Nag—Non-Aryan

Should anybody retain doubt on the question that the division of the society into classes did not prohibit intermarriages between the four Varnas let him consider the geneology of the family of the great Brahmin sage Vyas.

5. Geneology Of Vyas

Varuna Mitra = Urvashi
↳ Vashishtha = Akshamala
↓
Shakti =
Parashara = Matsyagandha
↓
= Vyas

Brahminism with the ferocity of an outraged brute proceeded to put a stop to these intermarriage between the different

Varnas. A new law is proclaimed by Manu. It is in the following terms:-

III. 12. For the first marriage of twice born men (wives) of equal caste are recommended.

III. 13. It is declared that a Shudra woman alone can be the wife of a Shudra.

III. 14. A Shudra woman is not mentioned even in any (ancient) story as the (first) wife of a Brahmana or of a Kshatriya, though they lived in the (greatest) distress.

III. 15. Twice-born men who, in their folly, wed wives of the low (Sudra) caste, soon degrade their families and their children to the state of Shudras.

III. 16. According to Atri and to (Gautama) the son of Utathya, he who weds a Sudra woman becomes an outcast, according to Saunaka on the birth of a son, and according to Bhrigu he who has (male) offspring from a (Shudra female, alone).

III. 17. A Brahmana who takes a Sudra wife to his bed, will (after death) sink into hell; if he begets a child by her, he will lose the rank of a Brahmana.

III. 18. The manes and the gods will not eat the (offerings) of that man who performs the rites in honour of the gods, of the manes, and of guests chiefly with a (Sudra wife's) assistance, and such (a man) will not go to heaven.

III. 19. For him who drinks the moisture of a Sudra's lips, who is tainted by her breath, and who begets a son on her, no expiation is prescribed.

Brahmanism was not satisfied with the prohibition of intermarriage. Brahmanism went further and prohibited interdining.

Manu lays down certain interdicts on food. Some are hygenic. Some are social. Of the social the following are worthy of attention:

IV. 218. Food given by a king, impairs his manly vigour; by one of the servile class, his divine light; by goldsmiths, his life; by leather cutters, his good name.

IV. 219. Given by cooks and the like mean artisans, it destroys his offsprings: by a washerman, his muscular strength;

IV. 221. That of all others, mentioned in order, whose food must never be tasted, is held equal by the wise to the skin, bones, and hair of the head.,

IV. 222. Having unknowingly swallowed the food of any such persons, he must fast during three days; but having eaten it knowingly, he must perform the same harsh penance, as if he had tasted any seminal impurity, ordure, or urine.

I said that Brahmanism acted with the ferocity of an outranged brute in undertaking the task of prohibiting intermarriage and interdining. Those who have doubts in this matter ponder over the language of Manu.

Mark the disgust Manu shows with regard to the Shudra woman.

Mark what Manu says about the food of the Shudra. He says it is as impure as semen or urine..

These two laws have produced the caste system. Prohibition of intermarriage and prohibition against interdining are two pillars on which it rests. The caste system and the rules relating to intermarriage and interdining are related to each other as ends to means. Indeed by no other means could the end be realized.

The forging of these means shows that the creation of the caste system was end and aim of Brahmanism. Brahmanism enacted the prohibitions against intermarriage and interdining. But Brahmanism introduced other changes in the social system and if the purposes underlying these changes are those which I suggest them to be, then it must be admitted that Brahmanism was so keen in sustaining the caste system that it did not mind whether ways and means employed were fair or unfair, moral or immoral. I refer to the laws contained in the Code of Manu regarding marriage of girls and the life of widows.

See the law that Manu promulgates regarding the marriage of females.

IX. 4. Reprehensible is the father who gives not (his daughter) in marriage at the proper time.

IX. 88. To a distinguished, handsome suitor of equal caste should a father give his daughter in accordance with the prescribed rule, though she have not attained (the proper age), i.e. although she may not have reached puberty.

By this rule Manu enjoins that a girl should be married even though she may not have reached the age of puberty i.e. even when she is a child.

Now with regard to widows Manu promulgates the following rule.

V. 157. At her pleasure let her (i.e. widow) emaciate her body, by living voluntarily on pure flowers, roots and fruits; but let her not, when her lord is deceased. even pronounce the name of another man.

V. 161. But a widow, who from a wish to bear children, slights her deceased husband by marrying again, brings disgrace on herself here below, and shall be excluded from the seat of her lord (in heaven).

V. 162. Offspring begotten on a woman by any other than her husband, is here declared to be no progeny of hers; no more than a child, begotten on the wife of another man belongs to the begetter; nor is a second husband any where prescribed for a virtuous woman.

This is the rule of enforced widowhood for a woman. A reference may also be made to Sati or a widow who burns herself on the funeral pyre of her husband and thus puts an end to her life. Manu is silent about it.

Yajnavalkya[13] an authority nearly as great as Manu says, she must not live separately or alone.

86. When deprived of her husband, she must not remain away from her father, mother, son, brother, mother-in-law or from her maternal uncle; otherwise she might become liable to censure.

Here again Yajnavalkya does not suggest that a widow become a Sati. But Vijnaneshwar, the author of Mitakshara a

commentary on Yajnavalkya Smriti makes the following observation in commenting on the above Sloka.

"This is in the case of the alternative of leading a celibate life vide the text of Vishnu![14] "After the death of the husband, either celibacy or ascending the (cremation) pile after him."

Vijnaneshwar[15] adds as his opinion that 'There is great merit in ascending the funeral pyre after him.'

From this one can very easily and clearly see how the rule of Sati came to be forged. Manu's rule was that a widow was not to remarry. But it appears from the statement by Vijnaneshwar that from the time of the Vishnu Smriti a different interpretation began to put on the ordinance of Manu. According to this new interpretation Manu's rule was explained to be offering to the widow a choice between two alternatives: (1) Either burn yourself on your husband's funeral pyre or (2) If you don't, remain unmarried. This of course is totally false interpretation quite unwarranted by the clear words of Manu. Somehow it came to be accepted. The date of the Vishnu Smriti is somewhere about the 3rd or 4th Century. It can therefore be said that rule of Sati dates from this period.

One thing is certain, these were new rules. The rule of Manu that girl should be married before she reached puberty is a new rule. In Pre-Buddhistic Brahmanism[16] marriages were performed not only after puberty but they were performed when girls had reached an age when they could be called grown up. Of this there is ample evidence. Similarly the rule that a woman once she had lost her husband must not remarry is a new rule. In the Pre-Buddhist Brahmanism there was no prohibition on widow remarriage. The fact that the Sanskrit language contains words such as *Punarbhu* (woman who has undergone a second marriage ceremony) and *punarbhav* (second husband) show that such marriages were quite common under the Pre-Buddhist Brahmanism.[17] With regard to Sati the position as to when it arose,[18] there is evidence to suggest that it existed in ancient times. But there is evidence that it had died out and it was revived after Brahmanism under Pushyamitra obtained its victory over Buddhism although it was some time later than Manu.

Question is this, why these changes were made by the triumphant Brahmanism? What did Brahmanism want to achieve by having girls married before they had become pubert, by denying the widow the right to marry again and by telling her to put herself to death by immolating herself in the funeral pyre of her deceased husband? No explanations are forthcoming for these changes. Mr. C.V. Vaidya who offers an explanation for girl marriage says[19] that girl marriage was introduced to prevent girls from joining the Buddhist order of nuns. This explanation does not satisfy me. Mr. Vaidya omits to take into consideration another rule laid down by Manu—namely the rule relating to suitable age for marriage. According to that rule.

> IX. 94 A man, aged thirty, shall marry a maiden of twelve who pleases him, or a man of twenty-four a girl eight years of age.

The question is not why girl marriage was introduced. The question is why Manu allowed so much discrepancy in the ages of the bride and the bridegroom.

Mr. Kane[20] has attempted an explanation of Sati. His explanation is that there is nothing in it. It existed in India in ancient times as it did in other parts of the world. This again does not satisfy me. If it existed outside India, it has not been practised on so enormous a scale as in India. Secondly if traces of it are found in Ancient India in the Kshatriyas, why was it revived, why was it not universalized? There is no satisfactory explanation. Mr. Kane's explanation that the prevalence of Sati by reference to laws of inheritance does not appear to me very convincing. It may be that because under the Hindu Law of inheritance as it prevailed in Bengal, women got a share in property. The relations of the husband of the widow pressed her to be a Sati in order to get rid of a share may explain why Sati was practised on so large a scale in Bengal. But it does not explain how it arose nor how it came to be practised in other parts of India.

Again with regard to the prohibition of widow remarriage, there is no explanation whatsoever. Why was the widow, contrary to established practice, prohibited from marrying? Why was she required to lead a life of misery? Why was she disfigured?

My explanation for girl marriage, enforced widowhood and Sati is quite different and I offer it for what it is worth.[21]

"The superposition of endogamy over exogamy means the creation of Caste. But this is not an easy affair. Let us take an imaginary group that desire to make itself into a caste and analyse what means it will have to adopt to make itself endogamous. If a group desires to make itself endogamous, a formal injunction against intermarriage with outside groups will be of no avail, especially if prior to the introduction of endogamy, exogamy were to be the rule in all matrimonial relations. Again there is a tendency in all groups living in close contact with one another to assimilate and amalgamate, and thus consolidate into a homogeneous society. If this tendency be strongly counteracted in the interest of Caste formation, it is absolutely necessary to circumscribe a circle without which people should not contract marriages."

"Nevertheless this encircling to prevent marriages from without creates problems from within which are not very easy of solution. Roughly speaking in a normal group the two sexes are more or less evenly distributed, and generally speaking there is an equality between those of the same age. But this equality is never quite realised in actual societies. While to the group that is desirous of making itself into a caste the maintenance of this equality between the sexes becomes the ultimate goal, for without this endogamy can no longer subsist. In other words, if endogamy is to be preserved, conjugal rights from within have to be provided for, else members of the group will be driven out of the circle to take care of themselves in any way they please. But in order that the conjugal rights be provided for from within, it is absolutely necessary to maintain a numerical equality between the marriageable units of the two sexes within the group desirous of making itself into a Caste. It is only through the maintenance of this equality that the necessary endogamy of the group could be kept intact, and a very large disparity is sure to break it."

"The problem of Caste then ultimately resolves itself into one of repairing the disparity between the marriageable units of the two sexes within it. The much needed parity between the units could be realized only when a couple dies

simultaneously. But this a rare contingency. The husband may die before the wife and create a surplus woman who must be disposed of, else through intermarriage she will violate the endogamy of the group. In like manner the husband may survive his wife and be a surplus man whom the group, while it may sympathise with him for the sad bereavement, has to dispose of, else he will marry outside the Caste and will break the endogamy. Thus both the surplus man and the surplus woman constitute a menace to the Caste if not taken care of, for, not finding suitable partners inside their prescribed circle (and they cannot find any, for there are just enough pairs to go round) very likely they will transgress the boundary, marry outside and import population that is foreign to the Caste. Let us see what our imaginary group is likely to do with this surplus man and surplus woman. We will first take up the case of the surplus woman. She can be disposed of in two different ways so as to preserve the endogamy of the Caste."

"First: burn her on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband and get rid of her. This, however, is rather an impracticable way of solving the problem of sex disparity. In some cases it may work, in others it may not. Consequently every surplus woman cannot thus be disposed of, because it is an easy solution but a hard realization. However, the surplus woman (widow) if not disposed of, remains in the group: but in her very existence lies a double danger. She may marry outside the Caste and violate to endogamy or she may marry within the Caste and through competition encroach upon the chances of marriage that must be reserved for the potential brides in the Caste. She therefore is a menace in any case and something must be done to her if she cannot be burned along with her deceased husband."

"The second remedy is to enforce widowhood on her for the rest of her life. So far as the objective results are concerned burning is a better solution than enforcing widowhood. Burning the widow eliminates all the three evils that a surplus woman is fraught with. Being dead and gone she creates no problem of remarriage either inside or outside the Caste. But compulsory widowhood is superior to burning because it is more practicable. Besides being comparatively humane it also guards against the evils of remarriage as does burning; but it fails to guard the

morals of the group. No doubt under compulsory widowhood the woman remains and, just because she is deprived of her natural right of being a legitimate wife in future, the incentive to bad moral conduct is increased. But this is no means an insuperable difficulty. She can be degraded to a condition where she could no longer be a source of allurement."

"The problem of surplus man (—widower) is much more important and much more difficult than that of the surplus woman in a group that desires to make itself into a Caste. From time immemorial man as compared with woman has had the upper hand. He is a dominant figure in every group and of the two sexes has greater prestige. With this traditional superiority of man over woman his wishes have always been consulted. Woman on the other hand has been an easy prey to all kinds of iniquitous injunctions, religious, social or economic. But man as a maker of injunctions is most often above them all. Such being the case you cannot accord the same kind of treatment to a surplus man as you can to a surplus woman in a Caste."

"The project of burning him with his deceased wife is hazardous in two ways: first of all it cannot be done, simply because he is a man. Secondly, if done, a sturdy soul is lost to the Caste. There remain then only two solutions which can conveniently dispose of him. I say conveniently because he is an asset to the group."

"Important as he is to the group, endogamy is still more important, and the solution must assure both these ends. Under these circumstances he may be forced, or I should say induced, after the manner of the widow to remain a widower for the rest of his life. This solution is not altogether difficult, for without there being any compulsion some are so disposed as to enjoy self-imposed celibacy or may even take a further step of their own accord to renounce the world and its joys. But, given human nature as it is, this solution can hardly be expected to be realized. On the other hand, as is very likely to be the case, if he remains in the group as an active participator in group activities, he is a danger to the morals of the group. Looked at from a different view point, celibacy though easy in cases where it succeeds, is not so advantageous even then to

the material prospects of the Caste. If he observes genuine celibacy and renounces the world, he would not be a menace to the preservation of Caste endogamy or Caste morals as undoubtedly would be, if he remained a secular person. But as an ascetic celibate he is as good as burned, so far as the material well-being of his Caste is concerned. A Caste, in order that it may be large enough to afford a vigorous communal life, must be maintained at a certain numerical strength. But to hope for this and to proclaim celibacy is the same as trying to cure atrophy by bleeding.

"Imposing celibacy on the surplus man in the group therefore fails, both theoretically and practically. It is in the interest of the Caste to keep him as a Grahastha (one who raises a family) to use a Sanskrit technicality. But the problem is to provide him with a wife from within the Caste. At the outset this is not possible, for the ruling ratio in a caste has to be one man to one woman and none can have two chances of marriage, for in a Caste thoroughly self enclosed there are always just enough marriageable women to go round for the marriageable men. Under these circumstances the surplus man can only be provided with a wife by recruiting a bride from the ranks of those not yet marriageable in order to tie him down to the group. This is certainly the best of the possible solutions in the case of the surplus man. By this, he is kept within the Caste. By this, this numerical depletion through constant outflow is guarded against, and by this endogamy and morals are preserved.

"It will now be seen that the four means by which numerical disparity between the two sexes is conveniently maintained are: (1) Burning the widow with her deceased husband; (2) Compulsory widowhood—a milder form of burning; (3) Imposing celibacy on the widower; (4) Wedding him to a girl not yet marriageable. Though as I said above, burning the widow and imposing celibacy on the widower are of doubtful service to the group in its endeavour to preserve its endogamy, all of them operate as means. But means as forces, when liberated or set in motion create an end. What then is the end that these means create? They create and perpetuate endogamy, while caste and endogamy, according to our analysis of the various definitions of caste, are one and the same thing. Thus the

existence of these means, means caste and caste involves these means."

"This, in my opinion, is the general mechanism of a caste in a system of castes. Let us now turn to the castes in the Hindu Society and inquire into their mechanism. I need hardly promise that there are a great many pitfalls in the path of those who try to unfold the past, and caste in India to be sure is a very ancient institution. This is especially true where there exist no authentic or written history or records or where the people, like the Hindus are so constituted that to them writing history is a folly, for the world is an illusion. But institutions do live, though for a long time they may remain unrecorded and as often as not customs and morals are like fossils that tell their own history. If this is true, our task will be amply rewarded if we scrutinize the solution the Hindus arrived at to meet the problems of the surplus man and surplus woman."

"Complex though it be in its general working the Hindu Society, even to a superficial observer, presents three singular uxorial customs, namely:-

(i) Sati or the burning of the widow on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband.

(ii) Enforced widowhood by which a widow is not allowed to remarry.

(iii) Girl marriage.

In addition to these, one also notes a great hankering after Sannyasa (renunciation) on the part of the widower, but it may in some cases be due purely to psychic disposition.

"So far as I know, no scientific explanation of the origin of these customs is forth-coming even today. We have plenty of philosophy to tell us why these customs were honoured. (Cf. A.K. Coomaraswamy—"Sati: a Defence of the Eastern Woman" in the British Sociological Review Vol. VI 1913) Because it is a "proof of the perfect unity of body and soul" between husband and wife and of "devotion beyond the grave", because it embodied the ideal of wifehood which is well expressed by Uma when she said "Devotion to her Lord is woman's honour, it is her eternal heaven: and O Maheshwara", she adds with a most touching human cry, "I desire not paradise itself if thou art not satisfied

with me!" Why compulsory widowhood is honoured I know not nor have I yet met with anyone who sang in praise of it, though there are a great many who adhere to it. The eulogy in honour of girl marriage is reported by Dr. Ketkar to be as follows: "A really faithful man or woman ought not to feel affection for a woman or a man other than the one with whom he or she is united. Such purity is compulsory not only after marriage, but even before marriage, for that is the only correct ideal of chastity. No maiden could be considered pure if she feels love for a man other than to whom she might get married. As she does not know whom she is going to get married to, she must not feel affection for any man at all before marriage. If she does so, it is a sin. So it is better for a girl to know whom she has to love, before any sexual consciousness has been awakened in her". Hence, girl marriage.

"This high-flown and ingenious sophistry indicates why these institutions were honoured, but does not tell us why they were practised. My own interpretation is that they were honoured because they were practised. Any one slightly acquainted with rise of individualism in the 18th century will appreciate my remark. At all times, it is the movement that is most important; and the philosophies grow around it long afterwards to justify it and give it a moral support. In like manner I urge that the very fact that these customs were so highly eulogized proves that they needed eulogy for their prevalence. Regarding the question as to why they arose, I submit that they were needed to create the structure of caste and the philosophies in honour of them were intended to popularize them or to gild the pill, as we might say, for they must have been so abominable and shocking to the sense of the unsophisticated that they needed a great deal of sweetening. These customs are essentially of the nature of means, though they are represented as ideals. But this should not blind us from understanding the results that flow from them. One might safely say that idealization of means is necessary and in this particular case was perhaps motivated to endow them with greater efficacy. Calling means an end does not harm except that it disguises its real character, but it does not deprive it of its real nature, that of a means. You may pass a law that all cats are dogs, just as you can call a means an end.

But you can no more change the nature of means thereby than you can turn cats into dogs; consequently I am justified in holding that, regard them as ends or as means, Sati, enforced widowhood and girl marriage are customs that were primarily intended to solve the problem of the surplus man and surplus woman in a caste and to maintain its endogamy. Strict endogamy could not be preserved without these customs, while caste without endogamy is fake."

According to my view, girl marriage, enforced widowhood and Sati had no other purpose than that of supporting the Caste System which Brahmanism was seeking to establish by prohibiting intermarriage. It is difficult to stop intermarriage. Members of different castes are likely to go out of their Caste either for love or for necessity. It is to provide against necessity that Brahmanism made these rules. This is my explanation of these new rules, made by Brahmanism. That explanation may not be acceptable to all. But there can be no doubt that Brahmanism was taking all means possible to prevent intermarriages between the different classes taking place.

Another illustration of this desire on the part of Brahmanism is to be found in the rule regarding excommunication promulgated by Manu.

Manu says that a person who is excommunicated by his Caste is an outcast.[22] According to Manu an outcast is to be treated as though he was actually dead. Manu ordains that his obsequies should be performed and lays down the mode and manner of performing these obsequies of the outcast.

> XI. 183. The Sapindas and Samanodakas of an outcast must offer (a libation of) water (to him, as if he were dead), outside (the village), on an inauspicious day, in the evening and in the presence of the relatives, officiating priests, and teachers.
>
> XI. 184. A female slave shall upset with her foot a pot filed with water, as if it were for a dead person; (his Sapindas) as well as the Samanodakas shall be impure for a day and a night.

Manu however allows the outcast to return to Caste on performing penance as will be seen from the following rules:-

XI. 187. But when he has performed his penance, they shall bathe with him in a holy pool and throw down a new pot, filled with water.

XI. 188. But he shall throw that pot into water, enter his house and perform, as before, all the duties incumbent on a relative.

XI. 189. Let him follow the same rule in the case of female outcasts; but clothes, food, and drink shall be given to them, and they shall live close to the (family) house.

But if the outcast was recalcitrant and impenitent Manu provides for his punishment.

Manu will not allow the outcast to live in the family house. Manu enjoins that.

XI. 189..... Clothes, food, and drink shall be given to them (i.e. the outcast members of the family), and they shall live close to the (family) house.

III. 92. Let him (i.e. the householder) gently place on the ground (some food) for dogs, outcasts, chandals, those afflicted with diseases that are punishments of former sins, crows and insects.

Manu declares that having social intercourse with an outcast is a sin. He warns the Snataka

IV. 79. ....Not (to) stay together with outcasts.

IV. 213. .... Not (to eat food given) by outcasts.

To the householder Manu says:

III. 151. Let him (i.e. the householder) not entertain at a Shradha.

III. 157. (A person) who forsakes his mother, his father, or a teacher without (sufficient) reason, he who has contracted an alliance with outcasts either through the Veda or through a marriage.

Manu ordains a social boycott of the outcast by penalizing those who associate with him.

XI. 181. He who associates himself for one year with an outcast himself becomes an outcast; not by sacrificing,

reading the Veda, or contracting affinity with him, since by those acts he loses his class immediately, but even by using the same carriage or seat, or by taking his food at the same board.

XI. 182. He who associates with any one of those outcasts, must perform, in order to atone for (such) intercourse, the penance prescribed for that (sinner).

Then there are penalties against an outcast who defies his caste and chooses to remain an outcast. Manu tells him what will be his penalty in the next world.

XII. 60. He who has associated with outcasts (will) become Brahmarakshas (i.e., an evil spirit).

Manu however was not prepared to leave the outcast with this. He proceeds to enact penalty the severity of which cannot be doubted. The following are the penal sections of Manu Smriti against an outcast.

III. 150 ..... Those Brahmins who are ..... outcasts ....Athesists are unworthy (to partake) of oblations to the gods and manes.

IX. 201. .....Outcast receive(s) no share (in inheritance).

XI. 185. But thenceforward (i.e., after the obsequies of the outcast have been performed) it shall be forbidden to converse with him, to sit with him, to give him a share of the inheritance, and to hold with him such intercourse as is usual among men.

XI. 186. And (if the outcast be the eldest) his right of primogeniture shall be withheld and the additional share, due to the eldest son; and in his stead a younger brother, excelling in virtue (i.e., who observes the rule of caste) shall obtain the share of the eldest.

Such is the law of Manu against an outcast. The severity of the penalties prescribed against him is quite obvious. Its effect is to exclude him from all social intercourse, to suspend him from every civil function, to disqualify him for all offices and to disable him from inheriting any property. Under these pains and penalties the outcaste might as well be dead which

indeed Manu considers him to be, directing libations to be offered to the manes as though he was naturally so. This system of privations and mortifications was enforced by prescribing a similar fate to anyone who endeavoured to associate with an outcast. The penalty was not confined to the outcast. Nor was it restricted to males. Males and females were both subject to the law of the outcast. Even their progeny was subject to penalty. The law was extended to the son of the outcast. Born before ex-communication the son was entitled to inherit immediately, as though his father was dead. Born after excommunication he lost his right to inherit, i.e. he became an outcast along with his father.

The laws of Manu regarding the outcast are of course devoid of justice and humanity. Some might think that there is nothing very strange about them. That is because these laws are very similar to the laws against apostacy and heresy to be found in all religious codes. It is unfortunately a fact. All religions—*Except Buddhism*—have used or misused the laws of inheritance for enforcing adhesion and conformity to their codes. The conversion of a Christian to Judaism or paganism or any other religion was punished by the Emperors Constantines and Julian with confiscation of goods to which the Emperors Theodosius and Valentiniaus added capital punishment, in case the apostle endeavoured to pervert others to the same inequity. This was borrowed by all the European countries[23] who maintained a similar system of penalties to enforce the Christian faith.

Such a view of the law of the outcast would be quite superficial. First of all the outcast is a creation of Brahmanism. It is a necessary coefficient of caste. Indeed once Brahmanism was determined to create the caste system the law against the outcast was absolutely essential. For only by punishing the outcast can the caste system be maintained. Secondly there is a difference between the Christian or Mohamedan Law of Apostacy and the Brahmanic law of caste. The disqualification under the Christian or Mohamedan law of apostacy was restricted to want of religious belief or the profession of wrong religious belief. Under the Brahmanic law the disqualification had no connection with belief or want of belief. It was connected with the sanctity of a certain form of a social organizaton—

namely Caste. It is the act of going out of one's caste that was made punishable. This is a very important difference.

The Brahmanic law of the outcast as compared with the law of apostacy in other religions shows that a belief in God is not essential to Brahmanism; that a belief in life after death is not essential to Brahmanism; that a belief in salvation either by good deeds or by a belief in a prophet is not essential to Brahmanism; that a belief in the sacredness of the Vedas is essential to Brahmanism. This is only one thing that is essential to Brahmanism. For it is only breach of caste which is penalized. All else is left to violation.

Those who are not blind to these forces of integration will admit that this act of Brahmanism in prohibiting intermarriage and interdining is nothing short of a complete dismemberment of society. It is a death knell to unity, an effective bar to united action. As will be shown hereafter Brahmanism was keen on preventing united action by Non-Brahmins to overthrow Brahmanism and that is why Brahmanism brought about this segmentation of Indian Society. But the fatal effects of a poison can never be confined to the limits of the original intention of the perpetrator. The same thing has happened in the case of Caste. Brahmanism intended to paralyse the Non-Brahmans for action against Brahmins. It did not design that they as a nation should be paralysed for action against a foreign nation. But the result of the poison of Caste has been they have become stricken for action against Brahmanism as well as against foreigners. In other words Brahmanism in instituting Caste system has put the greatest impediment against the growth of nationalism.

In spite of what others say the Hindu will not admit that there is any thing evil in the Caste system; and from one point of view he is right. There is love, unity and mutual aid among members of a family. There is honour among thieves. A band of robbers have common interests as respects to its members. Gangs are marked by fraternal feelings and intense loyalty to their own ends however opposed they may be to the other gangs. Following this up one can say that a Caste has got all the praiseworthy characteristics which a society is supposed to have.

It has got the virtues of a family in as much as there is love, unity and mutual aid. It has got the honour known to prevail among thieves. It has got the loyalty and fraternal feeling we meet with in gangs and it also possesses that sense of common interests which is found among robbers.

A Hindu may take satisfaction in these praiseworthy characteristics of the Caste and deny that there is anything evil in it. But he forgets that his thesis that Caste is an ideal form of social organization is supportable on the supposition that each caste is entitled to regard himself as an independent society, as an end in itself as nations do. But the theory breaks down when the consideration pertains to Hindu Society and to the Caste-System which goes with it.

Even in such a consideration of the subject the Hindu will not admit that the Caste system is an evil. Charge Hinduism with the responsibility for the evils of the Caste-System and the Hindu will at once retort, "What about the Class System in Europe?" Upto a point the retort is good if it means that there exists nowhere that ideal society of the philosophers marked by organic unity, accompanied by praiseworthy community of purpose, mutuality of sympathy, loyalty to public ends and concern for general welfare. Nobody can have much quarrel if the Hindu by way of analogy were to say that in every Society there are families and classes marked by exclusiveness, suspicion, and jealousy as to those without; bands of robbers, gangs, narrow cliques, trade unions, Employees' Associations, Kartels, Chambers of Commerce and political parties. Some of these are held together by the interest and plunder and others while aspiring to serve the public do not hesitate to prey upon it.

It may be conceded that everywhere *de facto* society whether in the past or in the present is not a single whole but a collection of small groups devoted to diverse purposes as their immediate and particular objectives. But the Hindu cannot take shelter under this analogy between the Hindu caste system and the Non-Hindu Class system and rest there as though there is nothing more to be said about the subject. The fact is there is a far bigger question which the Hindu has still to face. He must take note of the fact that although every

society consists of groups there are societies in which the groups are only non-social while there are societies in which the groups are anti-social. The difference between a society with the class system and a society with the caste system lies just in this namely the class system is merely non-social but the caste system is possitively anti-social.

It may be important to realize why in some societies the group system produces only non-social feeling and in some societies the group system produces anti-social feeling. No better explanation of this difference can be given than the one given by professor John Dewey. According to him every thing depends upon whether the groups are isolated or associated, whether there is reciprocity of interest between them or whether there is lack of reciprocity of interest. If the groups are associated, if there is a reciprocity of interest between them the feeling between them will be only non-social. If the groups are isolated, if there is no reciprócity between them the feeling between them will be anti-social. To quote Professor Dewey.[24]

> "The isolation and exclusiveness of a gang or clique brings its anti-social spirit into relief. But this same spirit is found wherever one group has interests 'of its own' which shut it out from full interaction with other groups, so that its prevailing purpose is the protection of what it has got, instead of reorganization and progress through wider relationships. It marks nations in their isolation from one another; families which seclude their domestic concerns as if they had no connection with a larger life; schools when separated from the interest of home and community; the divisions of rich and poor; learned and unlearned. The essential point is that isolation makes for rigidity and formal institutionalizing of life, for static and selfish ideals within the groups."

The question to be asked is not whether there are groups in a Society or whether the Society is one single whole. The question to be asked is what degree of association, cooperative intercourse and interaction exists among the different groups: how numerous and varied are the interests which are consciously shared by them: how full and free is the interplay with other forms of Association? A society is not to be condemned

as body because there are groups in it. It is to be condemned if the groups are isolated, each leading an exclusive life of its own. Because it is this isolation which produces the anti-social spirit which makes co-operative effort so impossible of achievement.

This isolation among the classes is the work of Brahmanism. The principal step taken by it was to abrogate the system of intermarriage and interdining that was prevalent among the four Varnas in olden times. This has already been discussed in an earlier section of this chapter. There is however one part of the story that remains to be told. I have said the Varna system had nothing to do with marriage. That males and females belonging to the different Varnas could marry and did marry. Law did not come in the way of inter-varna marriage. Social morality was not opposed to such marriages. Savarna marriage was neither required by law nor demanded by Society. All marriages between different Varnas—irrespective of the question whether the bride was of a higher Varna than the bride-groom or whether the bride-groom was of the higher Varna and the bride of the lower Varna—were valid. Indeed as Prof. Kane says the distinction between Anuloma and Pratiloma marriage was quite unknown and even the terms Anuloma and Pratiloma were not in existence. They are the creation of Brahmanism. Brahmanism put a stop to Pratiloma marriages i.e. marriages between women of a higher Varna and men of lower Varna. That was step in the direction of closing the connection between the Varnas and creating in them an exclusive and anti-social spirit regarding one another. But while the inter-connecting gate of the Pratiloma marriage was closed the inter-connecting gate of Anuloma marriage had remained open. That was not closed. As pointed out in the section on graded inequality Anuloma marriage i.e. marriage between a male of the higher Varna and the female of the lower Varna was allowed by Brahmanism to continue. The gate of Anuloma marriage was not very respectable and was a one way gate only, still it was an interconnecting gate by which it was possible to prevent a complete isolation of the Varnas. But even there Brahmanism played what cannot but be called a dirty trick. To show how dirty the trick was it is necessary first to state the rules which prevailed for determining the status of

the child. Under the rule existing from very ancient times the status of the child was determined by the Varna of the father. The Varna of the mother was quite unimportant. The following illustrations will place the point beyond doubt:

Father's name	Varna of father	Mother's Name	Varna of mother	Child's name	Varna of child
1. Shantanu	Kshatriya	Ganga	Shudra (Anamik)	Bhishma	Kshatriya
2. Shantanu	Kshatriya	Matsyagandha	Shudra (Fisher)	Vichitra Virya	Kshatriya
3. Parashar	Brahmin	Matsyagandha	Shudra (Fisher)	Krishna-Dwaipayana	Brahmin
4. Vishwamitra	Kshatriya	Menaka	(Apsara)	Shakuntala	Kshatriya
5. Yayati	Kshatriya	Devayani	Brahmin	Yadu	Kshatriya
6. Yayati	Kshatriya	Sharmishta	Asuri (Nonaryan)	Druhya	Kshatriya
7. Jaratkaru	Brahmin	Janatkari	Nag. (Nonaryan)	Asita	Brahmin

The rule was known as the rule of Pitra Savarnya. It would be interesting to consider the effect of this rule of Pitra Savarnya on the Anuloma and Pratiloma systems of marriage.

The effect on Pratiloma marriage would be that the children of mothers of the higher Varnas would be dragged down to the level of the lower Varnas represented by their fathers. Its effect on Anuloma marriage would be just the contrary. The children of mothers of the lower Varnas would be raised up and absorbed in the higher Varnas of their fathers.

Manu stopped Pratiloma marriages and thereby prevented the higher from being dragged to the status of the lower. However regrettable, not much damage was done by it so long as the Anuloma marriage and the rule of Pitra Savarnya continued in operation. The two together formed a very useful system. The Anuloma marriage maintained the inter-connection and the Pitra Savarnya rule made the higher classes quite composite in their make up. For they could not but help to be drawn from mothers of different Varnas. Brahmanism did not want to keep this gate of intercommunication between the Varnas open. It was bent on closing it. But it did it in a manner which is disreputable. The straight and honourable way was to stop Anuloma marriage. But Brahmanism did not do that. It allowed the system of Anuloma marriage to continue.

What it did was to alter the rule of determining the status of the child. It replaced the rule of Pitra Savarnya by the rule of Matra Savarnya by which the status of the child came to be determined by the status of the mother. By this change marriage ceased to be that means of inter social communication which it principally is. It relieved men of the higher Varna from the responsibility to their children simply because they were born of a mother of lower Varna. It made Anuloma marriage mere matter of sex, a humiliation and insult to the lower Varnas and a privilege to the higher classes to lawfully commit prostitution with women of the lower classes. And from a larger social point of view it brought the complete isolation among the Varnas which has been the bane of Hindu Society. Notwithstanding all this the Orthodox Hindu still believes that the caste system is an ideal system. But why talk about the orthodox Hindus. There are among enlightened politicians and historians. There are of course Indians both politicians and historians who vehemently deny that the Caste system comes in the way of nationalism. They presume that India is a nation and feel very much offended if anybody instead of speaking of the Indian Nation speaks of the people of India. This attitude is quite understandable. Most of the politicians and historians are Brahmins and cannot be expected to have the courage to expose the misdeeds of their ancestors or admit the evils perpetrated by them. Ask any one the question, is India a nation, and all in a chorus say. "yes'. Ask for reasons, they will say that India is a nation firstly because India has a geographical unity of the country and secondly because of the fundamental unity of the culture. All this may be admitted for the sake of argument and yet it is true to say that to draw an inference from these facts that India is a nation is really to cherish a delusion. For what is nation? A nation is not a country in the physical sense of the country whatever degree of geographical unity it may possess. A nation is not people synthesized by a common culture derived from common language, common religion or common race. To recall what I have said in another place "Nationality is a subjective psychological feeling. It is a feeling of a corporate sentiment of oneness which makes those who are charged with it feel that they are kith and kin. This national feeling is a double edged feeling. It is at once a feeling of fellowship for

one's own kith and an anti-fellowship feeling for those who are not one's own kith. It is a feeling of "consciousness of kind" which binds together those who are within the limits of the kindred and severs them from those who are outside the limits of the kindred. It is a longing to belong to one's own group and a longing not to belong to any other group. This is the essence of what is called a nationality and national feeling. This longing to belong to one's own kindred as I said is a subjective psychological feeling and what is important to bear in mind is that the longing to belong to one's kindred is quite independent of geography, culture or economic or social conflict. There may be geographical unity and yet there may be no "longing to belong". There may be no geographical unity and yet the feeling of longing to belong may be very intense. There may be cultural unity and yet there may be no longing to belong. There may be economical conflict and class divisions and yet there may be an intense feeling of longing to belong. The point is that nationality is not primarily a matter of geography culture or"....

6. The Suppression of the Shudras

In the declining[25] days of the Vedic Regime, the Shudras as well as women had come to occupy a very low position. The rising tide of Buddhism had brought about a great change in the status of both. To put it briefly a Shudra under the Buddhist regime could acquire property, learning and could even become a king. Nay he could even rise to the highest rung of the social ladder occupied by the Brahmin in the Vedic Regime. The Buddhist order of Bhikshus was counterpart of the Vedic order of Brahmins. The two orders, each within its own religious system were on a par in the matter of status and dignity. The Shudra could never aspire to be a Brahmin in the Vedic regime but he could become a Bhikshu and occupy the same status and dignity as did the Brahmin. For, while the Vedic order of Bramhins was closed to the Shudra, the Buddhist order of Bhikshus was open to him and many Shudras who could not become Brahmins under the Vedic Regime had become their peers by becoming Bhikshus under Buddhism. Similar change is noticeable in the case of women. Under the Buddhist regime she became a free person. Marriage did not make her a slave. For marriage under the Buddhist rule was a contract.

Under the Buddhist Regime she could acquire property, she could acquire learning and what was unique, she could become a member of the Buddhist order of Nuns and reach the same status and dignity as a Brahmin. The elevation of the status of the Shudras and women was so much the result of the gospel of Buddhism that Buddhism was called by its enemies as the Shudra religion (i.e., the religion of the low classes).

All this of course must have been very galling to the Brahmins. How very galling it must have been to them is shown by the vandallic fury with which Bramhanism after its triumph over Buddhism proceeded to bring about a complete demolition of the high status to which the Shudras and women had been elevated by the revolutionary changes effected by the vivifying gospel of Buddhism.

Starting with this background one shudders at the inhumanity and cruelty of the laws made by Manu against the Shudras. I quote a few of them assembling them under certain general heads.

Manu asks the householders of the Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya Class:

> IV. 61. Let him not dwell in a country where the rulers are Shudra.....

This cannot mean that Bramhana, Kashtriya and Vaishya should leave the country where Shudra is a ruler. It can only mean that if a Shudra becomes a king he should be killed. Not only a Shudra is not to be recognized as fit to be a king, he is not to be deemed as a respectable person. For Manu enacts that:—

> XI. 24. A Bramhin shall never beg from a Shudra property for (performing) a sacrifice i.e., for religious purposes.

All marriage ties with the Shudra were proscribed. A marriage with a woman belonging to any of the three higher classes was forbidden. A Shudra was not to have any connection with a woman of the higher classes and an act of adultery committed by a Shudra with her was declared by Manu to be an offence involving capital punishment.

> VIII. 374. A Shudra who has an intercourse with a woman of the higher caste guarded[26] or unguarded, shall be punished in the following manner; if she was unguarded, he loses the offending part. If she was guarded then he should be put to death and his property confiscated.

Manu insists that a Shudra shall be servile, unfit, for office, without education, without property and as a contemptible person, his person and property shall always be liable to be conscripted

As to office, Manu prescribes.

> VIII. 20. A Bramhana who is only a Brahmana by descent i.e. one has neither studied nor performed any other act required by the Vedas may, at the king's pleasure, interpret the law to him i.e., act as the Judge, but never a Shudra (however learned he may be).

> VIII. 21. The Kingdom of that monarch who looks on while a Shudra settles the law will sink low like a cow in a morass.

> VIII. 272. If a Shudra arrogantly presumes to preach religion to Bramhins the King shall have poured burning oil in his mouth and ears.

In olden times the study of the Vedas stood for education. Manu declares that the study of the Vedas was not a matter of right but that it was a matter of privilege. Manu deprived the Shudra of the right to study Veda. He made it a privilege of the three higher classes. Not only did he debar the Shudra from the study of the Vedas but he enacted penalties against those who might help the Shudra to acquire knowledge of the Veda. To a person who is privileged to study the Vedas, Manu ordains that:

> IV. 99. He must never read the Vedas.... in the presence of the Shudras.

and prescribes that:-

> III. 156. He who instructs Shudra pupils and he whose teacher is a Shudra shall become disqualified for being invited to Shradha.

Manu's successor went much beyond him in the cruelty of their punishment of the Shudra for studying the Veda. For instance Katyayana lays down that if a Shudra overheard the Veda or ventured to utter a word of the Veda, the King shall cut his tongue in twain and put hot molten lead in his ears.

As to property Manu is both ruthless and shamelss. According to the Code of Manu:

X. 129. No superfluous collection of wealth must be made by a Shudra, even though he has power to make it, since a servile man, who has amassed riches, becomes proud, and, by his insolence or neglect, gives pain to Bramhans.

The reason for the rule is more revolting than the rule itself. Manu was of course not sure that the prohibitory injunction will be enough to prevent the Shudra from acquiring wealth. To leave no room for the Shudra to give offence to the Bramhins by his accumulation of wealth Manu added another section to his code whereby he declared that:

VIII. 417. A Bramhana may seize without hesitation if he be in distress for his subsistence, the goods of a Shudra.

Not only is the property of a Shudra liable to conscription but the labour of the Shudra, Manu declares, is also liable to conscription. Compare the following provision in Manu:

VIII. 413. A Bramhana may compel a Shudra, whether bought or unbought to do servile work; for he is created by the creator to be the slave of a Bramhana.

A Shudra was required by Manu to be servile in his speech. How very servile he must be can be seen from the following provisions in Manu:-

VIII., 270. A Shudra who insults a twice born man with gross invective, shall have his tongue cut out; for he is of low origin.

VIII. 271. If he mentions the names and castes of the (twice born) with contumely, an iron nail, ten fingers long, shall be thrust red hot into his mouth.

Manu's object was to make the Shudra not merely a servile person but an altogether contemptible person. Manu will not

allow a Shudra the comfort of having a high sounding name. Had Manu not been there to furnish incontrovertible proof it would be difficult to believe that Brahmanism could have been so relentless and pitiless in its persecution of the Shudra. Observe Manu's law as to the names that the different classes can give to their children.

II. 31. Let the first part of a Brahman's name denote something auspicious, a Kshatriya's be connected with power, and a Vaishya's with wealth, but a Shudra's express something contemptible.

II. 32. The second part of a Bramhan's name shall be a word implying happiness, of a Kshatrya's word implying protection, of a Vaishya's a term expressive of thriving and of a Shudra's an expression denoting service.

The basis of all these inhuman laws is the theory enunciated by Manu regarding the Shudra. At the outset of his Code, Manu takes care to assert it emphatically and without blushing. He says:

I. 91. One occupation only, the Lord prescribed to the Shudra, to serve meekly these other three castes (namely Bramhin, Kshatriya and Vaishya).

Holding that the Shudra was born to be servile, Manu made his laws accordingly so as to compel him to remain servile. In the Buddhist regime a Shudra could aspire to be a judge, a priest and even a king, the highest status that he could ever aspire to. Compare with this the ideal that Manu places before the Shudra and one can get an idea of what fate was to be under Brahmanism:

X. 121. If a Shudra, (unable to subsist by serving Brahmanas), seeks a livelihood, he may serve Kshatriyas, or he may also seek to maintain himself by attending on a wealthy Vaishya.

X. 122. But let a (Shudra) serve Brahmanas, either for the sake of heaven, or with a view to both (this life and the next); for he who is called the servant of a Brahmana thereby gains all his ends.

X. 123. The service of Brahmanas alone is declared (to

be) an excellent occupation for a Shudra; for whatever else besides this he may perform will bear him no fruit.

X. 124. They must allot to him out of their own family (property) a suitable maintenance, after considering his ability, his industry, and the number of those whom he is bound to support.

X. 125. The remnants of their food must be given to him, as well as their old household furniture.

7. The Degradation of the Women

Manu can hardly be said to be more tender to women than he was to the Shudra. He starts with a low opinion of women. Manu proclaims:

II. 213. It is the nature of women to seduce men in this (world); for that reason the wise are never unguarded in (the company of) females.

II. 214. For women are able to lead astray in (this) world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and (to make) him a slave of desire and anger.

III. 215. One should not sit in a lonely place with one's mother sister or daughter; for the senses are powerful, and master even a learned man.

IX. 14. Women do not care for beauty, nor is their attention fixed on age; (thinking), '(It is enough that) he is a man' they give themselves to the handsome and to the ugly.

IX. 15. Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however carefully they may be guarded in this (world).

IX. 16. Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation, to be such, (every) man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them.

IX. 17. (When creating them) Manu allotted to women (a love of their) bed, (of their) seat and (of) ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct.

The laws of Manu against women are of a piece with this view. Women are not to be free under any circumstances. In the opinion of Manu:-

IX. 2. Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males (of) their (families), and, if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control.

IX. 3. Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age; a woman is never fit for independence.

IX. 5. Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling (they may appear); for, if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families.

IX. 6. Considering that the highest duty of all castes, even weak husbands (must) strive to guard their wives.

V. 147 By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.

V. 148 In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent.

V. 149. She must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both (her own and her husband's) families contemptible.

Woman is not to have a right to divorce.

IX. 45. The husband is declared to be one with the wife, which means that there could be no separation once a woman is married.

Many Hindus stop here as though this is the whole story regarding Manu's law of divorce and keep on idolizing it by comforting their conscience by holding out the view that Manu regarded marriage as sacrament and therefore did not allow divorce. This of course is far from the truth. His law against divorce had a very different motive. It was not to tie up a man to a woman but it was to tie up the woman to a man and to leave the man free. For Manu does not prevent a man for

giving up his wife. Indeed he not only allows him to abandon his wife but he also permits him to sell her. But what he does is to prevent the wife from becoming free. See what Manu Says:

IX. 46 Neither by sale nor by repudiation is a wife released from her husband.

The meaning is that a wife, sold or repudiated by her husband, can never become the legitimate wife of another who may have bought or received her after she was repudiated. If this is not monstrous nothing can be. But Manu was not worried by considerations of justice or injustice of his laws. He wanted to deprive women of the freedom she had under the Buddhistic regime. He knew, by her misuse of her liberty, by her willingness to marry the Shudra that the system of the gradation of the Varna had been destroyed. Manu was outraged by her license and in putting a stop to it he deprived her of her liberty.

A wife was reduced by Manu to the level of a slave in the matter of property.

IX. 146. A wife, a son, and a slave, these three are declared to have no property; the wealth which they earn is (acquired) for him to whom they belong.

When she becomes a widow Manu allows her maintenance if her husband was joint and a widow's estate in the property of her husband if he was separate from his family. But Manu never allows her to have any dominion over property.

A woman under the laws of Manu is subject to corporal punishment and Manu allows the husband the right to beat his wife.

VIII. 299. A wife, a son, a slave, a pupil, and a younger brother of the full blood, who have committed faults, may be beaten with a rope or a split bamboo.

In other matters woman was reduced by Manu to the same position as the Shudra.

The study of the Veda was forbidden to her by Manu as it was to the Shudra.

II. 66. Even for a woman the performance of the *Sanskaras* are necessary and they should be performed. But they should be performed without uttering the Veda Mantras.

IX. 18. Women have no right to study the Vedas. That is why their Sanskars are performed without Veda Mantras. Women have no knowledge of religion because they have no right to know the Vedas. The uttering of the Veda Mantras is useful for removing sin. As women cannot utter the Veda Mantras they are as unclean as untruth is.

Offering sacrifices according to Bramhanism formed the very soul of religion. Yet Manu will not allow women to perform them. Manu ordains that:-

XI. 36. A woman shall not perform the daily sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas.

XI. 37. If she does it, she will go to hell.

To disable her from performing such sacrifices Manu prevents her from getting the aid and services of a Bramhin priest.

IV. 205. A Bramhin must never eat food given at a sacrifice performed by a woman.

IV. 206. Sacrifices performed by women are inauspicious and not acceptable to God. They should therefore be avoided.

Woman was not to have any intellectual pursuits and nor free will nor freedom of thought. She was not to join any heretical sect such as Buddhism. If she continues to adhere to it, till death she is not to be given the libation of water as is done in the case of all dead.

Finally a word regarding the ideal of life, Manu has sought to place before a woman. It had better be stated in his own words:

V. 151. Him to whom her father may give her, or her brother with the father's permission, she shall obey as long as he lives and when he is dead, she must not insult his memory.

V. 154. Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife.

V. 155. No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by women, apart from their husbands; if a wife obeys her husband, she will for that reason alone be exalted in heaven.

Then comes the choicest texts which forms the pith and the marrow of this ideal which Manu prescribes for the women:

V. 153. The husband who wedded her with sacred Mantras, is always a source of happiness to his wife, both in season and out of season, in this world and in the next.

150. She must always, be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, careful in cleaning her utensils, and economical in expenditure.

This the Hindus regard as a very lofty ideal for a woman!!!

The severity of these laws against Shudras and women show that the phenomenal rise of these classes during the Buddhist regime had not only offended the Brahmins but had become intolerable to them. It was a complete reversal of their sacred social order from top to bottom. The first had become last and the last had become first. The laws of Manu also explain, the determined way in which the Brahmins proceeded to use their political power to degrade the Shudras and the women to their old status. The triumphant Brahmanism began its onslaught on both the Shudras and the women in pursuit of the old ideal namely servility and Brahmanism did succeed in making the Shudras and women the servile classes. Shudras, the serfs to the three higher classes and women the serfs to their husbands. Of the black deeds committed by Brahmanism after its triumph over Buddhism this one is the blackest. There is no parallel in history for so foul deeds of degradation committed by a class of usurpers in the interest of class domination. The colossal character of this deed of degradation perpetrated by Brahmanism is unfortunately not fully realized. It is concealed by those small monosyllablic words, Stri and Shudra. Let those who wish to get an idea of the enormity of their deed think of the numbers that lie behind

these two terms. What part of the population do they apply to? The woman represents one half of the population. Of the balance the Shudra represents not less than two third. The two together make up about 75 per cent of the total population. It is this huge mass of people that has been doomed by Brahmanism to eternal servility and eternal degradation. It is because of the colossal scale of degradation whereby 75 per cent of her people were deprived of their right to life, liberty and persuit of happiness that India became a decaying if not a dead nation.

8. Graded Inequality

The principle of graded inequality runs through the whole of the Manu Smriti. There is no department of life in which he has not introduced his principle of graded inequality. For a complete and thorough exposition of it, it would be necessary to reproduce the whole of Manu Smriti. I will take only a few departments to illustrate how in the hands of Manu the principle of graded inequality became imbedded in the social life.

Take the field of marriage. Observe the rule of Manu:-

III. 13. It is declared that a Shudra woman alone (can be) the wife of a Shudra, she and one of his own caste (the wives) of a Vaishya, those two and one of his own caste the wives of a Kshatriya., those three and one of his own caste (the wives of a Bramhan).

Take the rules of Manu regarding the treatment of guests:—

III. 110. But a Kshatriya (who comes) to the house of a Brahmana is not called a guest (atithi), nor a Vaisya, nor a Shudra, nor a personal friend, nor a relative, nor the teacher.

III. 111. But if Kshatriya comes to the house of a Brahmana in the manner of a guest, (the house-holder) may feed him according to his desire, after the above mentioned Brahmanas have eaten.

III. 112. Even a Vaisya and a Shudra who have approached his house in the manner of guests, he may allow to eat with his servants, showing (thereby) his compassionate disposition.

In the house of a Brahmana, nobody except a Brahmin is to have the honour of being a guest[27] If the Kshatriya comes in the manner of a guest to the house of a Brahmin he is to be fed after all the Brahmins are fed and if the Vaishyas and Shudras come in the manner of guests they are to be fed after everybody is fed and only in the company of servants.

Take the rules of Manu regarding Sanskaras:

X. 126. A Shudra has no right to receive the sacraments.

X. 68. The law prescribes that neither of the two (that is those who belong to mixed castes) shall receive the sacraments the first being excluded on account of lowness of his origin of his parents was against the order of the castes.

II. 66. The whole series[28] of sacraments must be performed for females also in order to sanctify the body at the proper time and in the proper order, but without the recitation of sacred Vedic Mantras.

Manu further lays down that:

VI. I. A twice born Snataka, who has thus lived according to the law in the order of householders, may, taking a firm resolution and keeping his organs in subjection, dwell in the forest, duly (observing the rules given below).

VI. 33. But having thus passed the third part of (a man's natural term of) life in the forest, he may live as an ascetic during the fourth part of his existence, after abandoning all attachment to worldly objects.

Even in law Manu introduces the principle of graded inequality. To take only two illustrations, the law of defamation, abuse and the law of assault:

VIII. 267. A Kshatriya having defamed a Brahmana, shall be fined one hundred (panas); A Vaisya one hundred and fifty or two hundred; a Shudra shall suffer corporal punishment.

VIII. 268. A Brahmana shall be fined fifty (panas) for defaming a Kshatriya; in (the case of) a Vaishya the fine

shall be twenty five (panas); in (the case of) a Shudra twelve.

VIII. 269. For offences of twice born men against those of equal caste (varna, the fine shall be) also twelve (panas) for speeches which ought not to be uttered, that (and every fine shall be) double.

VIII. 276. (For mutual abuse) by a Brahmana and a Kshatriya a fine must be imposed by a discerning (king), on the Brahmana the lowest amercement, but on the Kshatriya the middlemost.

VIII. 277. A Vaishya and a Shudra must be punished exactly in the same manner according to their respective castes, but the tongue (of the Shudra) shall not be cut out; that is the decision.

VIII. 279. With whatever limb a man of a low caste does hurt to (a man of the three) highest (castes), even that limb shall be cut off; that is the teaching of Manu.

VIII. 280. He who raises his hand or a stick, shall have his hand cut off; he who in anger kicks with his foot, shall have his foot cut off.

Everywhere is the principle of graded inequality. So ingrained it had become in the social system that the successors of Manu were careful to introduce it where he had failed to give effect to it. For instance Manu had recognized the system of slavery. But had failed to prescribe whether the system of slavery was or was not subject to the principle of graded order of insubordination.

Lest it should be understood that the law of graded inequality did not apply to slavery and that a Brahmin may be a slave of the Shudra. Yajnavalkya at once proceeds to clear the doubt. He expressly laid down that:-

"Slavery is in the descending order of the Varnas and not in the ascending order" (XIV. 183).

Vijnaneshwar in his commentary on Yajnavalkya makes it concrete by his illustrations when he says:

"Of the Varnas such as the Brahmana and the rest, a

state of slavery shall exist *Anulomyena*, in the descending order. Thus, of a Brahmana, a Kshatriya and the rest may become a slave; of a Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra; and of a Vaishya, Shudra, thus the state of slavery shall operate in the descending order."

Stated in the language of equality and inequality, this means that the Brahmin is the highest because he can be the slave of nobody but is entitled to keep a person of any class as his slave. The Shudra is the lowest because everybody can keep him as his slave but he can keep no one as his slave except a Shudra. The place assigned to the Kshatriya and the Vaishya introduces the system of graded inequality. A Kshatriya while he is inferior to the Brahmin he can be the slave of the Brahmin. While he is yet superior to the Vaishyas and the Shudras because he can keep them as his slaves; the Vaishyas and the Shudras have no right to keep a Kshartiya as his slave. Similarly a Vaishya while he is inferior to the Bramhins and the Kshatriyas, because they can keep him as their slave and he cannot keep any one of them as his slave, he is proud that he is at least superior to the Shudra because he can keep the Shudra as his slave while Shudra cannot keep the Vaishya as his slave.

Such is the principle of graded inequality which Bramhanism injected into the bone and the marrow of the people. Nothing worse to paralyze society to overthrow inequity could have been done. Although its effects have not been clearly noticed there can be no doubt that because of it the Hindus have been stricken with palsy. Students of social organization have been content with noting the difference between equality and inequality. None have realized that in addition to equality and inequality there is such a thing as graded inequality. Yet inequality is not half so dangerous as graded inequlity. Inequality carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction. Inequality does not last long. Under pure and simple inequlity two things happen. It creates general discontent which forms the seed of revolution. Secondly it makes the sufferers combine against a common foe and on a common grievance. But the nature and circumstances of the system of graded inequality leave no room for either of these two things to happen. The system of graded inequality prevents

the rise of general discontent against inequity. It cannot therefore become the storm centre of revolution. Secondly, the sufferers under inequlity becoming unequal both in terms of the benefit and the burden there is no possibility of a general combination of all classes to overthrow the inequity. To make the thing concrete the Brahmanic law of marriage is full of inequity. The right of Brahmana to take a woman from the classes below him but not to give a woman to them is an inequity. But the Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra will not combine to destroy it. The Kshatriya resents this right of the Brahmana. But he will not combine with Vaishya or the Shudra and that for two reasons. Firstly because he is satisfied that if the Brahman has the right to take the right of three communities, the Kshatriya has the right to appropriate the women of two communities. He does not suffer so much as the other two. Secondly if he joins in a general revolution against this marriage-inquity in one way he will rise to the level of the Brahmins but in another way all will be equal which to him means that the Vaishyas and the Shudras will rise to his level i.e., they will claim Kshatriya women-which means he will fall to their level. Take any other inequity and think of a revolt against it. The same social psychology will show that a general rebellion against it is impossible.

One of the reasons why there has been no revolution against Brahmanism and its inequities is due entirely to the principle of graded inequality. It is a system of permitting a share in the spoils with a view to enlist them to support the spoils system. It is a system full of low cunning which man could have invented to perpetuate inequity and to profit by it. For it is nothing else but inviting people to share in inequity in order that they may all be supporters of inequity.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. On this point see Jaiswal's Volume on Manu & Yajnavalkya.
2. Commentary on Manu. 1.1.
3. Harsha Charita, quoted by Smith (1924) p. 208.
4. The rule was so strict that according to the Apastamba Dharmasutra 'A Brahman shall not take up a weapon in his hand though he may be only desirous of examining it'. It may be matter of some surprise how Pushyamitra who was a Brahmin could have done a deed which could under the

circumstances be expected only from a member of the martial race. This difficulty is well explained by Haraprasad Shastri. According to him the Sungas though Brahmins were a martial race. Among the fighting Brahmans, two were distinguished among the rest, the Vishwamitras and the Bharadvajas. The wife of Vishvamitra Brahmin proving barren, a Bharadvaj was requested by the ancient custom of 'Niyog' to beget a son on Vishvamitra's. The issue was Sung. He was the progenitor of a Gotra and that Gotra took up the Samveda for their study. The Sungas were called a Dvayamushyam gotra i.e., a gotra issuing from the two gotras. Vishvamitra and Bharadvaj both of which had taken to military occupation—*See* Buddhistic Studies (Ed. by Law) Ch. XXXIV. p. 820.

5. I am here following the clues supplied by the investigations of Mr. Daphtary and Pradnayneshwar Yati. The former's Dharma Rahasya and latter's Chaturvarnya are very valuable as they are quite original in their point of view. The subject of course needs to be further investigated along the lines suggested by them.
6. One can now see why Sumati Bhargava called his Code as the Code of Manu. He wanted to invest it with the dignity and authority of the ancient law-giver Manu.
7. This is the only theory which can explain how some of the Mantras of the Vedas are admitted to have been made by Shudras, a question which in view of the statement of Manu that the Shudras must not recite the Vedas, nor hear them recited becomes a very puzzling question.
8. Manu II. 67 Where Manu.
9. Manu II. 36-37.
10. On this point see Pradnaneshwar Yati's booklet on Upanayan.
11. Manu II. 69.
12. Under the Varna there could be no ignorant Brahmin. The possibility of an ignorant Brahmin can arise only when Varna becomes Caste i.e., when one becomes a Brahmin only by reason of birth.
13. The date of the Yajnavalkya Smriti is between 150-200 A.D.
14. Vishnu Smriti Ch. XXV 14.
15. He wrote his Mitakshara between 1070 and 1100 A.D.
16. See Kane—History of Dharmashastra I. part I. .
17. See Kane—History of Dharmashastra, Vol. II. Part II.
18. The available evidence on Sati has been collected by Kane in his History of Dharmashastra Vol. II Part I pp. 617-636.
19. History of India Vol. II.
20. History of Dharmashastra.
21. They will be found in my paper on"Castes in India" which appeared in *The Indian Antiquarry* for May, 1917.
22. The outcast is quite different from an Untouchable as will be shown later.
23. See Stephen's Commentaries on the Laws of England (15th Ed.) Vol IV, p 179.

24. Democracy and Education p. 99.
25. By declining days I mean the period since when the Brahmins started disturbing the balance of Chaturvaryna system by asserting their supremacy.
26. Guarded means under the protection of relation. Unguarded means living alone.
27. The word guest is used by Manu in a technical sense and means a Bramhana who stays one night only. see.III. 102.
28. Except Upanayan which is forbidden for women.

7

RESULTS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION*

Bramhanism inherited from the Vedic past the system of Chaturvarna. The system of Chaturvarna which the Hindus regard as the unique creation of their Aryan ancestors is in no sense unique. There is nothing original about it. The whole ancient world had stumbled into it. The Egyptians had it and the ancient Persians had it. Plato was so convinced about its excellence that he presented it as ideal form of social organization. The ideal of the Chaturvarna is faulty. The lumping together of individuals into a few sharply marked off classes is a very superficial view of man and his powers. The Ancient Aryans as well as Plato had no conception of the uniqueness of every individual, of his incommensurability with others and of each individual forming a class of his own. They had no recognition of the infinite diversity of active tendencies and combination of tendencies of which an individual is capable. To them there were types of faculties or powers in the individual constitution and all that is necessary for social organization is to classify them. All this is demonstrably wrong. Modern science has shown that lumping together of individuals into a few sharply marked off classes each confined to one particular sphere does injustice both to individual and to Society. The stratification of Society by classes and occupations is incompatible with the fullest utilization of the qualities which is so necessary for social advancement and is also incompatible with the safety and security of the individual as well as of Society in general.[1]

There is another mistake which the Ancient Hindus including Plato made. There is probably some truth in saying that there is among human beings a dimorphism or polyformism in human beings as there is among insects, though in the former it is only psychological while in the latter it is both

* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 321-331.

physical as well as psychological. But assuming that there is a thing psychological dimorphism or polyformism among human beings, it is wrong to separate them into those who are born to do one thing and others to do another, some born to command i.e., to be masters and some born to obey i.e., to be slaves. It is wrong to suppose that in a given person some qualities are present and others are absent. On the contrary, the truth is that all qualities are present in every person and this truth is not diminished in any way by that, some tendency predominates to the extent of being the only one that is apparent. So well established is this truth that a tendency which may be dominant in a man at one time may be quite different from and even the direct opposite of the tendency that may be dominant at another time. As Prof. Bergson[2] in speaking of the Nietsche's false antithesis of 'men' and 'slaves' observes:

"We have a clear vision of this (falsity) in times of revolution. Unassuming citizens, upto that moment humble and obedient, wake up one fine day with pretentions to be leaders of men."

The cases of Mussolini and Hitler are a complete disproof of the theory of the Aryans and of Plato.

This Vedic system of Chaturvarna, far from being an ideal system was made positively worse by the changes which Bramhanism made and which have already been described. Every one of them was mischievous in character is beyond question. The Buddhist order of Bhikshu and the Vedic order of Brahmins were designed to serve the same purpose. They formed the elite of their society whose function was to lead and guide society along the right road. Although designed to discharge the same function the Buddhist Bhikshu was better placed to discharge it than was the Bramhin. That is because Buddha recognized one thing which nobody either before him or after him has done. Buddha realized that for a person to give a true lead to Society and be its trustworthy guide he must be intellectually free and further, which is more important, to be intellectually free he must not have private property. An elite charged with the care of his private property must fail to discharge his duty of leading and guiding Society along the right road. Buddha therefore took care to include in the Code of Discipline for the Bhikshus a rule prohibiting a Bhikshu

from holding private property. In the Vedic order of Bramhins there was no such prohibition. A Bramhin was free to hold property. This difference produced a profound difference on the character and outlook of the Buddhist Bhikshu and the Vedic Bramhin. The Bhikshus formed an intellectual class. The Bramhins formed on the other hand merely an educated class. There is a great difference between an intellectual class and an educated class. An intellectual class has no limitations arising out of any affiliations to any class or to any interest. An educated class on the other hand is not an intellectual class although it has cultivated its intellect. The reason is that its range of vision and its sympathy to a new ideology is circumscribed by its being identified with the interest of the class with which it is affiliated.

The Bramhins from the very beginning therefore were inclined to be a purely educated class, enlightened but selfish. This evil in the Vedic order of Brahmins became extreme by the changes made in the old Vedic System. The right of the Brahmins to rule and the grant of special privileges and immunities made them more selfish, and induced in them the desire to use their education not for the advancement of learning but for the use of their community and against the advancement of society.

All their energy and their education has been spent in maintaining their own privileges against the good of the public. It has been the boast of many Hindu authors that the civilization of India is the most ancient civilization in the world. They will insist there was no branch of knowledge in which their ancestors were not the pioneers. Open a book like "The Positive Background of Hindu Sociology" by Prof Benoy Kumar Sarkar, or a book like "The Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindus" by Dr. Brajendranath Seal one is overwhelmed with data touching upon the knowledge their ancestors had about various scientific subjects. From these books it would appear that the ancient Indians knew astronomy, astrology, biology, chemistry, mathematics, medicine, mineralogy, physics and in the view of the mass of people even aviation. All this may be very true. The important question is now how the ancient Indians discovered these positive sciences. The important question is why did the ancient Indians cease to make any progress in the

sciences in which they were the pioneers? This sudden arrest in the progress of science in ancient India is as astounding as it is deplorable. In the scientific world India occupies a position which even if it be first among the primitive is certainly last among the civilized nations. How did it happen that a people who began the work of scientific progress stopped, halted on the way, left in its inchoate and incomplete condition? This is a question that needs to be considered and answered, not what the ancient Indians knew.

There is only one answer to the question and it is a very simple answer. In ancient India the Bramhins were the only educated class. They were also the Class which was claiming to be above all others. Buddha disputed their claim for supremacy and declared a war on the Brahmins. The Brahmins acted as an Educated Class—as distinguished from an intellectual class—would act under the circumstances. It abandoned all pursuits and engaged itself in defending the claim of supremacy and the social, economic and political interests of its class. Instead of writing books on Science, the Brahmins undertook to write Smritis. Here is an explanation why the progress of science in India became arrested. Brahmins found it more important and more imperative to write Smritis to repel the Buddhist doctrine of social equality.

How many Smritis did the Brahmins write?

Mr. Kane a great authority on the Smriti literature has computed their number to be 128. And what for? The Smritis are called law books which of course hide their nature. They are really treatises expounding the supremacy of the Brahmins and their rights to special privileges. The defence of Bramhanism was more important than the progress of science. Bramhanism not only defended its privileges but set about extending them in a manner that would cover every descent man with shame. The Brahmins started particularly to expand the meaning of certain privileges granted to them by Manu.

Manu had given the Bramhins the right to *dana*, gift. The *dana* was always intended to be money or chattel. But in course of time the concept of *dana* was expanded so as to include the gift of woman which a Brahmin could keep as his

mistress or who could be released by the Bramhin on commutation[3] of money payment.

Manu designated the Bramhins as Bhu-devas, lords of the Earth. The Bramhins enlarged the scope of this statement and began to claim the right to sexual intercourse with women of other classes. Even queens were not exempt from this claim. Ludovico Di Varthema who came to India as a traveller in about 1502 A.D. records the following about the Brahmins of Calicut:

> "It is a proper, and the same time pleasant thing to know who these Brahmins are. You must know that they are the chief persons of the faith, as priests are among us. And when the King takes a wife, he selects the most worthy and the most honoured of these Brahmins and makes him sleep the first night with his wife, in order that he may deflower her."[4]

Similarly Hamilton[5] another writer says:

> "When the Samorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie (Nambudari Brahmin), or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and if he pleases, he may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships."

In the Bombay Presidency the priests of the Vaishnava sect claimed the right to deflower the women of their sect. This gave rise to the famous Maharaja Libel case brought by the chief priest of the Sect against one Karosondas Mulji in the High Court of Bombay in the year 1869 which shows that the right to claim the benefit of the first night was certainly effective till then.

When such a right to sexual cohabitation for the first night could be extended against the generality of the lower classes the Brahmins did not hesitate to extend it. This they did particularly in Malabar. There, Manu designated the Brahmins as Bhu-devas, lords of the earth. The Brahmins enlarged the scope of this statement and began to claim the right of promiscuous sexual intercourse with the women folk of the other Classes. This happened particularly in Malabar. There[6]

"The Brahman castes follow the Makatyam System that is the system by which the child belongs to its father's family. They contract within their own caste regular marriages, with all the ordinary legal and religious sanctions and incidents. But the Brahmin men are also in the habit of entering into Sambandhan-Unions with women of the lower castes".

This is not all. Observe further what the writer has to say:

"Neither party to a Sambandhan Unions becomes thereby a member of the other family; and the offspring of the Union belong to their mothers *tharwad* (family) and have no sort of claim, so far as the law goes, to share of their father's property or to maintenance therefrom."

Speaking of the origin of this practice the author of the Gazetteer observes that the origin of this institution:

"Is found in the claim of the Bhu-devas" or "Earth Gods" (that the Brahmanas) and on a lower plain of the Kshatriyas or the ruling classes, to the first fruits of lower Caste Womanhood, a right akin to the medieval droit de Seigneurie;"

It is an understatement to say that it is only a right to first fruits as the 'right to the first night' was called in the middle ages in Europe. It is more than that. It is a general right of the Brahmin against the lower caste to claim any woman of that class for mere prostitution, for the mere satisfaction of sexual appetite, without burdening the Brahmin to any of the obligations of marriage.

Such were the rights which the Brahmins the spiritual precepts claimed against the laity!! The Borgese Popes have been run down in history as the most debauched race of spiritual preceptors who ascended the throne of Peter. One wonders whether they were really worse than the Brahmins of India.

A purely intellectual Class, free to consider general good and having no interest of a class to consider, such as the one contemplated by Buddha is not to be had anywhere. For the limitations resulting from property on the freedom of intellect

of the elite have not been generally recognized until very recently. But this want of an intellectual class has been made good in other countries by the fact that in those countries each Strata of Society has its educated class There is safety, if no definite guidance, in the multiplicity of views expressed by different educated classes drawn from different strata of society. In such a multiplicity of views there is no danger of Society being misguided or misdirected by the views of one single educated class drawn from one single class of society and which is naturally bound to place the interest of its class before the interests of the country. By the change made by Brahmanism India ceased to have safe and sure guidance of an intellectual class. But what is worse is that the Hindus lost the safety and security which other peoples have and which arises from the multiplicity of views expressed by various educated classes drawn from different strata of Society.

By the denial of education to the Shudras, by diverting the Kshatriyas to military pursuits, and the Vaishyas to trade and by reserving education to themselves the Brahmins alone could become the educated class—free to misdirect and misguide the whole society. By converting Varna into Caste they declared that mere birth was a real and final measure of the worth of a man. Caste and Graded inequality made disunity and discord a matter of course.

All this disfigurement of the original Varna system would have been tolerable if it had remained a mere matter of social practice. But Brahmanism was not content to leave the matter there. It wanted to give the Chaturvarna in its changed and perverted form the force of law. This new Chaturvarna the making of Brahmanism occupies in the Manu Smriti as the Law of Persons and the Law of Family. Nobody can make a mistake about it. Manu made it an offence for a person of a lower Caste to arrogate to himself the status of a higher Caste or to pass off as a member of the higher Caste.

X. 96. A man of low caste who through covetousness lives by the occupations of a higher one, the king shall deprive him of his property and banish.

XI. 56. Falsely attributing to oneself high birth, giving information to the king (regarding a crime), and falsely

accusing one's teacher, (are offences) equal to slaying a Brahmana.

Here there are two offences, General Impersonation (X. 96) and impersonation by the Shudra (XI. 56). Note also the punishments how severe they are. For the first the punishment is confiscation of property and banishment. For the second the punishment is the same as the punishment for causing the death of a Brahmin.

The offence of personation is not unknown in modern jurisprudence and the Indian Penal Code recognizes it in section 419. But what is the punishment the Indian Penal Code prescribes for cheating by personation? Fine, and if imprisonment, then 3 years or both. Manu must be turning in his grave to find the British Government make so light of his law of Caste.

Manu next proceeds to direct the king that he should execute this law. In the first place he appeals to the King in the name of his pious duty:

> VIII. 172. By preventing the confusion of Castes ..... the power of the King grows, and he prospers in this world and after death.

Manu perhaps knows that the law relating to the confusion of Varna may not be quite agreeable to the conscience of the king and he avoids enforcement. Consequently Manu tells the King how in the matter of the execution of the laws the King should act:

> VIII. 177. Therefore let the King not heeding his own likes and dislikes behave exactly like Yama i.e., he should be as impartial as Yama the Judge of the Dead.

Manu however does not wish to leave the matter to the King as a mere matter of pious duty. Manu makes it a matter of obligation upon the King. Accordingly Manu lays down as a matter of obligation that:

> VIII. 410. The King should order a Vaishya to trade, to lend money, to cultivate the land, or to lend cattle, and the Shudra to serve the twice born Caste.

Again Manu reverts to the subject and says:

> VIII. 418 The King should carefully compel Vaishyas and Shudras to perform the work (prescribed) for them; for if these two castes swerved from their duties they would throw this whole world into confusion.

What if the Kings do not act up to this obligation. This law of Chaturvarna is so supreme in the eyes of Manu that Manu will not allow himself to be thwarted by a King who will not keep his obligation to maintain this law. Boldly Manu forges a new law that such a king shall be disposed. One can imagine how dear Chaturvarna was to Manu and to Brahmanism.

As I have said the Chaturvarna of the Vedic system was better than caste system though not very favourable to the creation of a Society which could be regarded as one single whole possessing the Unity of the ideal society. By its very theory the Chaturvarna has given birth to four classes. These four classes were far from friendly. Often they were quarreling and their quarrels were so bitter that they cannot but be designated as Class wars. All the same this old Chaturvarna had two saving features which Brahminism most selfishly removed. Firstly, there was no isolation among the Varnas. Intermarriage and interdining, the two strongest bonds for unity had full play. There was no room for the different Varnas to develop that anti-social feeling which destroys the very basis of Society. While the Kshatriyas fought against the Brahmins and the Brahmins fought against the Kshatriyas there were not wanting Kshatriyas who fought against the Kshatriyas[7] for the sake of Brahmins and there were not wanting Brahmins[8] who joined hands with Kshatiryas to put down the Brahmins.

Secondly, this old Chaturvarna was conventional. It was the ideal of the Society but it was not the law of the State. Brahmanism isolated the Varnas and sowed the seed of antagonism. Brahmanism made legal what was only conventional. By giving it a legal basis it perpetrated the mischief. The Vedic Chaturvarna if it was an evil would have died out by force of time and circumstances. By giving it the force of Law, Brahmanism has made it eternal. This is probably

the greatest mischief that Brahmanism has done to Hindu Society.

In considering this question one cannot fail to notice that the obligation imposed upon the King for the maintenance of the law of Chaturvarna which is another name for the system of graded inequality does not require the King to enforce it against the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. The obligation is limited to the enforcement of the law against the Vaishyas and the Shudras. Having regard to the fact that Brahmanism was so intent on giving the system the force of law the result has been very awkward to say the least about it. Notwithstanding this attempt at legalization the system remained half legal and half conventional, legal as to the Vaishyas and the Shudras and merely conventional as to Brahmins and Kshatriyas.

This difference needs to be accounted for. Was Brahmanism honest in its attempt to give the system the force of law? Did it wish that each of the four Varnas be bound by it? The fact that Brahmanism would not bind the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas by the law it made, shows that in this business Brahmanism was far from honest. If it believed in the system as ideal it could not have failed to make it of universal binding force.

But there is more than dishonesty in this foul game. One can quite understand why the Brahmins were left free and untrammeled by the shackles of the law. Manu called them Gods on earth and Gods must be above the law. But why were the Kshatiryas left free in the same way as the Brahmins. He knows that the Kshatriyas will not humble themselves before the Brahmins. He then proceeds to warn them, how the Brahmins can punish them if the Kshatriyas show arrogance and plan rebellion.

> IX. 320. When the Kshatriyas become in any way overbearing towards the Brahmanas, the Brahmanas themselves shall duly restrain them; for the Kshatriyas sprang from the Brahmanas.
>
> IX. 321. Fire sprang from water, Kshatriya from Brahmanas, iron from stone; the all-penetrating force of those (three) has no effect on that whence they were produced.

One might think that the reason why Manu does not impose an obligation upon the King to enforce the law against the Kshatriya was because the Brahmins felt themselves quite capable of dealing with Kshatriyas by their own prowess and without the aid of the King and that they meant to put their sanctions against the Kshatriyas when the time came and without fear of consequences. All this could not have been meant by Manu. For after uttering this vows of vengeance, and threats and imprecations, Manu suddenly comes down and begins to plead with the Kshatriyas for cooperation and common front with the Brahmins. In a verse next after the verse in which he utters the threats and imprecations against the Kshatriyas, Manu pleads:

> IX. 323. But (a king who feels his end drawing nigh) shall bestow all his wealth, accumulated from fines on Brahmanas, make over his kingdom to his son and then seek death in battle.

From imprecations to supplication is a very queer cry. What is the explanation of this anti-climax in the attitude of this strange behaviour of Manu towards the Kshatriyas? What is the object of this cooperation between Brahmins and Kshatriyas? Against whom is this common front to be? Manu does not explain. A whole history of a thousand years must be told before this puzzle is solved and the questions satisfactorily answered.

The history which furnishes the clue to the solution of this puzzle is the history of the class wars between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas.

Most of the orthodox Hindus are repelled by the doctrine of Class war which was propounded by Karl Marx and would be certainly shocked if they were told that the history of their own ancestors probably furnishes the most cogent evidence that Marx was searching for support of his theory. Indeed there have been numerous class wars between Brahmins and the Kshatiryas and only the most important of them have been recorded[9] in the ancient Hindu literature. We have record of the conflict between the Brahmins and the Kings who were all Kshatriyas. The first of these conflicts was a conflict with King Vena, the second with Pururavas, the third with Nahusha,

fourth with Nimi and fifth with Sumukha. There is a record of a conflict between Vashishtha, a Brahmin and Vishwamitra, an ordinary Kshatriya and not a king. Then we have the record of the wholesale massacre of the Brahmins of Bhrigu clan by the Kshatriya descendants of Kratavirya and then we have the record of the whole class of Kshatriyas exterminated by Parashuram acting on behalf of the Brahmanas. The issues that brought them in conflict extended over a wide range and show how bitter and strained must have been the feelings between Brahmins and Kshatriyas. There were conflicts over the question whether the Kshatriya had a right to become a Brahmana. There were conflicts over the question, whether the Brahmins were subject to the authority or not. There were conflicts on the question who should salute first and who should give way to whom. The wars were wars[10] of authority, status and dignity.

The results of these wars could not but be obvious to the Brahmins. Notwithstanding their boastful utterances they must have realized that it was not possible for them to crush the Kshatriyas and that notwithstanding the wars of extermination the Kshatriyas survived in sufficient numbers to plague the Brahmins. One need not pay any attention to the filthy story told by the Brahmins and alluded to by Manu that the Kshatriyas of the Manu's day were not the original Kshatriyas but a race of new Kshatriyas begotten by the Brahmins upon the widows of the old Kshatriyas who were massacred by Parashuram. Blackmailing is one of the means which Brahmanism is never ashamed of using to advance its own purposes. The fight of Brahmanism against the Kshatriyas was from the very beginning a fight between a fool and a bully. Brahmanas were fighting against the Kshatriyas for the maintenance of the Chaturvarna. Now it is this very Chaturvarna which allowed bayonets to the Kshatriyas and denied them to the Brahmins. How under this theory could the Brahmin fight with the Kshatriya with any hope of success? It could not have taken long for the Brahmins to realise the truth—which Tallyrand told Napoleon—that it is easy to give bayonets but it is very difficult to sit on them and that as Kshatriyas had bayonets and Brahmins none, war with the Kshatriya was the way to ruin. These were the direct

consequences of these wars between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. But there were others which could not have escaped the attention of the Brahmins. While the Brahmins and Kshatriyas were fighting among themselves nobody was left to check and keep the Vaishayas and the Shudras under control. They were on the road of social equality almost nearing to the status of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas. To Brahmanism the possibility of suppressing the Kshatriya was very remote and the danger of being overtaken by Vaishyas and Shudras were real and very real. Should the Brahmana continue to fight the Kshatriya and ignore the danger of the Vaishyas and the Shudras? Or Should the Brahmana give up the hopeless struggle against the Kshatriya and befriend him and make with him a common cause and suppress the growing menace of the Vaishyas and Shudras? Brahmanism after it was exhausted in the wars with the Kshatriyas chose the second alternative. It sought to befriend their worthwhile enemies the Kshatriyas to work for a new ideal, namely to enslave and exploit the two classes below them namely the Vaishyas and the Shudras. This new ideal must have taken shape some time when the Satpatha Brahmana came to be composed. It is in the Satpatha Brahmana we find the new ideal expressed it was well established. The language in which it is expressed, and the subject to which it is applied are so telling that I feel it should be quoted in its original terms. Says the author of the Satpatha[11]:

> "They then make the beast return (to the Ahavaniya[12]) the he-goat goes first of them. then the ass, then the horse. Now in going away from this (Ahavaniya) the horse goes first, then the ass, then the he-goat—for the horse corresponds to the Kshatriya (nobility), the ass to the Vaishya and Shudra, the he-goat to the Brahman and in-as-much as, in going from here, the horse goes first, therefore the Kshatriya, going first, is followed by the three others castes; and in-as-much as, in returning from here,the he-goat goes first, therefore, the Brahman, going first, is followed by the three other castes. And in-as-much as the ass does not go first either in going back from here, or in coming back from there, therefore the Brahmana and Kshatriya never go behind the Vaishya and Shudra; hence

they walk thus in order to avoid a confusion between good and bad. And, moreover, he thus encloses those two castes (the Vaishyas and Shudra) on both sides by the priesthood and the nobility and makes them submissive."

Here is the explanation of the puzzling attitude of Manu towards the Kshatriyas, attitude of willing to wound but afraid to strike, of wishing to dictate but preferring to befriend.

It is these wars and the compromise that had taught Manu that it was no use trying to coerce the Kshatriyas to submit to the domination of the Brahmin. It may be an ideal to be kept up. But as practical politics it was an impossible ideal. Like Bismark, Manu knew that politics was the game of the possible. What was possible was to make a common cause and to build up a common front between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas against the Vaishyas and the Shudras and this is what Manu did. The pity of it is that it was done in the name of religion. This need not shock anybody who has studied the soul and spirit of Brahmanism. With Brahmanism religion is a cloak to cover and hide its acquisitive politics.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For further consideration of this subject see my tract on "Annihilation of Caste."
2. "Two Sources of Morality", (Holt). p. 267.
3. I remember reading the report of a case in which a Brahmin who had taken a married wife as Dana refused to release her even though communication was offered by her husband.
4. "The Travels of Ludovico Di Varthema" (Pub. Hakyt Society) Page 141. Varthema adds "Do not imagine that the Brahmin goes willingly to perform this operation. The King is even obliged to pay him four hundred or five hundred ducats.
5. A New Account of the East Indies (1744) Vol. I. 310.
6. Gazetteer of Malabar and Anjengo District by Mr. C.A. Innes Vol. I. p. 95
7. This is how I interpret the story of Parashuram's war against the Kshatriyas.
8. Buddhism was a revolt against Brahmins and Brahmanism. Yet many of the early followers of Buddha and Buddhism were Brahmins.
9. All this record has been collected by Prof. Muir in his Original Sanskrit Texts. Vol. I.
10. See Hopkins—History of the Ruling Races.
11. Eggeling; Sathapatha Brahmana. Part III. pp. 226-227.
12. Avavaniya.

8

THE BHAGWAT GITA: PHILOSOPHIC DEFENCE OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION*

I

What is the place of the Bhagwat Gita in the literature of ancient India? Is it a gospel of the Hindu Religion in the same way as the Bible is of the Christian Religion? The Hindus have come to regard it as their gospel. If it is gospel, what does it really teach? What is the doctrine it stands for? The variety of answers given to this question by students competent to speak on the subject is really bewildering. Bohtlingk[1] says:

"The Gita contains by the side of many high and beautiful thoughts, not only a few weak points; contradictions (which the commentators have tried to pass over as excusable), repetitions, exaggerations, absurdities and loathsome points;"

"Hopkins[2] speaks of the Bhagwat Gita as a characteristic work of the Hindu Literature in its sublimity as in its peculiarities, in its logic as in its want of it; .... an ill-assorted cabinet of primitive philosophical opinions."

In his judgement:

"Despite its occasional power and music exaltation, the Divine song in its present state as a poetical production is unsatisfactory. The same thing is said over again, and the contradictions in phraseology and in meaning are as numerous as the repetitions, so that one is not surprised to find it described as "the wonderful song, which causes the hair to stand on end."

Holtzman[3] says:

"We have before us (in the Bhagwat Gita) a Vishnuite revision of a pantheistic poem."

* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 357-380.

Garbe[4] observes:

"The whole character of the poem in its design and execution is preponderatingly theistic. A personal God Krishna stands forth in the form of a human hero, expounds his doctrine, enjoins, above all things, on his listener, along with the performance of his duties, loving faith in Him and self-surrender:.... And by the side of this God (who is) delineated as personally as possible, and who dominates the whole poem—stands out frequently the impersonal neutral Brahman, the Absolute, as the highest principle. At one time Krishna says that He is the sole Highest God who has created the world and all beings and rules over it all; at another time, he expounds the Vedantic doctrine of Brahman and *maya*—the Cosmic Illusion, and expounds as the highest goal of human being that he be freed from the World-Illusion and become Brahman. These two doctrines—the theistic and the pantheistic—are mixed up with each other, and follow each other, sometimes quite unconnected and sometimes loosely connected. And it is not the case that the one is represented as a lower, exoteric, (Text p. 9) as the higher esoteric doctrine. It is nowhere taught that the Theism is a preliminary step to the knowledge of the reality of that it is its symbol, and that the pantheism of the Vedanta is the (ultimate) reality itself; but the two beliefs are treated almost throughout as though there was indeed no difference between them, either verbal or real."

Mr. Telang says:[5]

"There are several passages in the Gita which it is not very easy to reconcile with one another; and no attempt is made to harmonise them. Thus, for example, in stanza 16 of Chapter VII, Krishna divides his devotees into four classes, one of which consists of 'men of knowledge', whom Krishna says, he considers 'as his own self'. It would probably be difficult to imagine any expression which could indicate higher esteem. Yet in stanza 46 of Chapter VI, we have it laid down, that the devotee is superior not only to the mere performer of penances, but even to the men of knowledge. The commentators betray their gnostic bias by interpreting 'men, of knowledge' in this latter passage to mean those who have acquired erudition in the Shastras and their significations. This is not an

interpretation to be necessarily rejected. But there is in it a certain twisting of words, which, under the circumstances here, I am not inclined to accept. And on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, that the implications fairly derivable from Chapter IV, stanza 39 (pp. 62, 63), would seem to be rather than knowledge is superior to devotion—is the higher stage to be reached by means of devotion as the stepping stone. In another passage again at Gita, Chapter XII, stanza 12, concentration is preferred to knowledge, which also seems to me to be irreconcilable with Chapter VII, stanza 16. Take still another instance. At Gita, Chapter V stanza 15, it is said, that 'Lord receives the sin or merit of none.' Yet at Chapter IX, stanza 24 Krishna calls himself ' the Lord and enjoyer,' of all sacrifices and penances. How, it may be well asked, can the Supreme Being 'enjoy that which he does not even receive?' Once more at Chapter IX, stanza 29, Krishna declares that 'none is hateful to me, none dear.' And yet the remarkable verse at the close of Chapter XII seem to stand in pointblank contradiction to that declaration. There through a most elaborate series of stanzas, the burden of Krishna's eloquent sermon is 'such a one is dear to me.' And again in those fine verses, where Krishna winds up his Divine Law, he similarly tells Arjuna, that he, Arjuna, is 'dear' to Krishna. And Krishna also speaks of that devotee as 'dear' to him, who may publish the mystery of the Gita among those who reverence Supreme Being.[6] And yet again, how are we to reconcile the same passage about none being 'hateful or dear' to Krishna, with his own words at Chapter XVI, stanza 18 and following stanzas? The language used in describing the 'demoniac' people there mentioned is not remarkable for sweetness towards them, while Krishna says positively, 'I hurl down such people into demoniac wombs, whereby they go down into misery and the vilest condition.' These persons are scarcely characterized with accuracy 'as neither hateful nor dear' to Krishna. It seems to me, that all these are real inconsistencies in the Gita, not such, perhaps, as might not be explained away, but such, I think, as indicate a mind making guesses at truth, as Professor Max Muller puts it, rather than a mind elaborating a complete and organized system of philosophy. There is not even a trace of consciousness on the part of the author that these inconsistencies exist. And the contexts of the various passages

indicate, in my judgement, that a half-truth is struck out here and another half-truth there, with special reference to the special subject then under discussion; but no attempt is made to organize the various half-truths which are apparently incompatible, into a symmetrical whole, where the apparent inconsistencies might possibly vanish altogether in the higher synthesis."

These are the views of what might be called modern scholars. Turning to the view of the orthodox Pandits, we again find a variety of views. One view is that the Bhagwat is not a sectarian book. It pays equal respect to the three ways of salvation (1) Karma marga or the path of works (2) Bhakti marga or the path of devotion and (3) Jnana marga or the path of knowledge and preaches the efficacy of all three as means of salvation. In support of their contention that the Gita respects all the three ways of salvation and accepts the efficacy of each one of them, the Pandits point out that of the 18 Chapters of the Bhagwat Gita, Chapter 1 to 6 are devoted to the preaching of the Jnana marga, Chapters 7 to 12 to the preaching of Karma marga and Chapters 12 to 18 to the preaching of Bhakti marga and say that this equal distribution of its Chapters shows that the Gita upholds all the three modes of salvation.

Quite contrary to the view of the Pandits is the view of Shankaracharya and Mr. Tilak, both of whom must be classed amongst orthodox writers. Shankaracharya held the view that the Bhagwat Gita preached that the Jnana marga was the only true way of salvation. Mr Tilak[7] does not agree with the views of any of the other scholars. He repudiates the view that the Gita is a bundle of inconsistencies. He does not agree with the Pandits who say that the Bhagwat Gita recognizes all the three ways of salvation. Like Shankaracharya he insists that the Bhagwat Gita has a definite doctrine to preach. But he differs from Shankaracharya and holds that the Gita teaches Karma Yoga and not Jnana Yoga.

It cannot but be a matter of great surprise to find such a variety of opinion as to the message which the Bhagwat Gita preaches. One is forced to ask why there should be such divergence of opinion among scholars? My answer to this question is that scholars have gone on a false errand. They

have gone on a search for the message of the Bhagwat Gita on the assumption that it is a gospel as the Koran, the Bible or the Dhammapada is. In my opinion this assumption is quite a false assumption. The Bhagwat Gita is not a gospel and it can therefore have no message and it is futile to search for one. The question will no doubt be asked: What is the Bhagwat Gita if it is not a gospel? My answer is that the Bhagwat Gita is neither a book of religion nor a treatise on philosophy. What the Bhagwat Gita does is to defend certain dogmas of religion on philosophic grounds. If on that account anybody wants to call it a book of religion or a book of philosophy he may please himself. But essentially it is neither. It uses philosophy to defend religion. My opponents will not be satisfied with a bare statement of view. They would insist on my proving my thesis by reference to specific instances. It is not at all difficult. Indeed it is the easiest task.

The first instance one comes across in reading the Bhagwat Gita is the justification of war. Arjuna had declared himself against the war, against killing people for the sake of property. Krishna offers a philosophic defence of war and killing in war. This philosophic defence of war will be found in Chapter II[8] verses 11 to 28. The philosophic defence of war offered by the Bhagwat Gita proceeds along two lines of argument. One line of argument is that anyhow the world is perishable and man is mortal. Things are bound to come to an end. Man is bound to die. Why should it make any difference to the wise whether man dies a natural death or whether he is done to death as a result of violence? Life is unreal, why shed tears because it has ceased to be? Death is inevitable, why bother how it has resulted? The second line of argument in justification of war is that it is a mistake to think that the body and the soul are one. They are separate. Not only are the two quite distinct but they differ in-as-much as the body is perishable while the soul is eternal and imperishable. When death occurs it is the body that dies. The soul never dies. Not only does it never die but air cannot dry it, fire cannot burn it, and a weapon cannot cut it. It is therefore wrong to say that when a man is killed his soul is killed. What happens is that his body dies. His soul discards the dead body as a person discards his old clothes—wears new ones and carries on. As the soul is never killed,

killing a person can never be a matter of any movement. War and killing need therefore give no ground to remorse or to shame, so argues the Bhagwat Gita.

Another dogma to which the Bhagwat Gita comes forward to offer a philosophic defence is Chaturvarna. The Bhagwat Gita, no doubt, mentions that the Chaturvarna is created by God and therefore sacrosanct. But it does not make its validity dependent on it. It offers a philosophic basis to the theory of Chaturvarna by linking it to the theory of innate, inborn qualities in men. The fixing of the Varna of man is not an arbitrary act says the Bhagwat Gita. But it is fixed according to his innate, inborn qualities.[9]

The third dogma for which the Bhagwat Gita offers a philosophic defence is the Karma marga. By Karma marga the Bhagwat Gita means the performance of the observances, such as Yajnas as way to salvation. The Bhagwat Gita stands out for the Karma marga throughout and is a great upholder of it; The line it takes to defend Karma yoga is by removing the excrescence which had grown upon it and which had made it appear quite ugly. The first excrescence was blind faith. The Gita tries to remove it by introducing the principle of Buddhi yoga[10] as a necessary condition for Karma yoga. Become Stihtaprajna i.e., 'Befitted with Buddhi' there is nothing wrong in the performance of Karma kanda. The second excrescence on the Karma kanda was the selfishness which was the motive behind the performance of the Karmas. The Bhagwat Gita attempts to remove it by introducing the principle of *Anasakti* i.e., performance of karma without any attachment for the fruits of the *Karma.*[11] Founded in Buddhi yoga and dissociated from selfish attachment to the fruits of Karma what is wrong with the dogma of Karma kand? This is how the Bhagwat Gita defends the Karma marga.[12] It would be quite possible to continue in this strain, to pick up other dogmas and show how the Gita comes forward to offer a philosophic defence in their support where none existed before. But this could be done only if one were to write a treatise on the Bhagwat Gita. It is beyond the scope of a chapter the main purpose of which is to assign to the Bhagwat Gita its proper place in the ancient Indian literature. I have therefore selected the most important dogmas just to illustrate my thesis.

Two other questions are sure to be asked in relation to my thesis. Whose are the Dogmas for which the Bhagwat Gita offers this philosophical defence? Why did it become necessary for the Bhagwat Gita to defend these Dogmas?

To begin with the first question, the dogmas which the Gita defends are the dogmas of counter-revolution as put forth in the Bible of counter-revolution namely Jaimini's Purvamimamsa. There ought to be no difficulty in accepting this proposition. If there is any it is largely due to wrong meaning attached to the word Karma yoga. Most writers on the Bhagwat Gita translate the word Karma yoga as 'action' and the word Jnana yoga, as ' knowledge' and proceed to discuss the Bhagwat Gita as though it was engaged in comparing and contrasting knowledge versus action in a generalized form. This is quite wrong. The Bhagwat Gita is not concerned with any general, philosophical discussion of action versus knowledge. As a matter of fact, the Gita is concerned with the particular and not with the general. By Karma yoga or action Gita means the dogmas contained in Jaimini's Karma kanda and by Jnana yoga or knowledge it means the dogmas contained in Badarayana's Brahma Sutras. That the Gita in speaking of Karma is not speaking of activity or inactivity, quieticism or energism, in general terms but religious acts and observances cannot be denied by anyone who has read the Bhagwat Gita. It is to lift the Gita from the position of a party pamphlet engaged in a controversy on small petty points and make it appear as though it was a general treatise on matters of high philosophy that this attempt is made to inflate the meaning of the words Karma and Jnana and make them words of general import. Mr. Tilak is largely to be blamed for this trick of patriotic Indians. The result has been that these false meanings have misled people into believing that the Bhagwat Gita is an independent self-contained book and has no relation to the literature that has preceded it. But if one were to keep to the meaning of the word Karma yoga as one finds it in the Bhagwat Gita itself one would be convinced that in speaking of Karma yoga the Bhagwat Gita is referring to nothing but the dogmas of Karma kanda as propounded by Jaimini which it tries to renovate and strengthen.

To take up the second question: Why did the Bhagwat Gita feel it necessary to defend the dogmas of counter-revolution? To my mind the answer is very clear. It was to save them from the attack of Buddhism that the Bhagwat Gita came into being. Buddha preached non-violence. He not only preached it but the people at large—except the Brahmins—had accepted it as the way of life. They had acquired a repugnance to violence. Buddha preached against Chaturvarna. He used some of the most offensive similes in attacking the theory of Chaturvarna. The frame work of Chaturvarna had been broken. The order of Chaturvarna had been turned upside down. Shudras and women could become sannyasis, a status which counter-revolution had denied them. Buddha had condemned the Karma kanda and the Yajnas. He condemned them on the ground of *Himsa* or violence. He condemned them also on the ground that the motive behind them was a selfish desire to obtain bonus. What was the reply of the counter-revolutionaries to this attack? Only this. These things were ordained by the Vedas, the Vedas were infallible, therefore the dogmas were not to be questioned. In the Buddhist age, which was the most enlightened and the most rationalistic age India has known, dogmas resting on such silly, arbitrary, unrationalistic and fragile foundations could hardly stand. People who had come to believe in non-violence as a principle of life and had gone so far as to make it a rule of life—How could they be expected to accept the dogma that the Kshatriya may kill without sinning because the Vedas say that it is his duty to kill? People who had accepted the gospel of social equality and who were remaking society on the basis of each one according to his merits—how could they accept the Chaturvarna theory of gradation, and separation of man based on birth simply because the Vedas say so? People who had accepted the doctrine of Buddha that all misery in society is due to Tanha or what Tawny calls acquisitive instinct—how could they accept the religion which deliberately invited people to obtain boons by sacrifices merely because there is behind it the authority of the Vedas? There is no doubt that under the furious attack of Buddhism, Jaimini's counter-revolutionary dogmas were tottering and would have collapsed had they not received the support which the Bhagwat Gita gave them. The philosophic defence of the counter-revolutionary doctrines given by the

Bhagwat Gita is by no means impregnable. The philosophic defence offered by the Bhagwat Gita of the Kshatriya's duty to kill is to say the least puerile. To say that killing is no killing because what is killed is the body and not the soul is an unheard of defence of murder. This is one of the doctrines which make some people say that the doctrines make one's hair stand on their end. If Krishna were to appear as a lawyer acting for a client who is being tried for murder and pleaded the defence set out by him in the Bhagwat Gita there is not the slightest doubt that he would be sent to the lunatic asylum. Similarly childish is the defence of the Bhagwat Gita of the dogma of Chaturvarna. Krishna defends it on the basis of the Guna theory of the Sankhya. But Krishna does not seem to have realized what a fool he has made of himself. In the Chaturvarna there are four Varnas. But the gunas according to the Sankhya are only three. How can a system of four varnas be defended on the basis of a philosophy which does not recognize more than three varnas? The whole attempt of the Bhagwat Gita to offer a philosophic defence of the dogmas of counter-revolution is childish—and does not deserve a moment's serious thought. None-the-less there is not the slightest doubt that without the help of the Bhagwat Gita the counter-revolution would have died out, out of sheer stupidity of its dogmas. Mischievous as it may seem, to the revolutionaries the part played by the Bhagwat Gita, there is no doubt that it resuscitated counter-revolution and if the counter-revolution lives even today, it is entirely due to the plausibility of the philosophic defence which it received from the Bhagwat Gita—anti-Veda and anti-Yajna. Nothing can be a greater mistake than this. As will appear from other portions of the Bhagwat Gita that it is not against the authority of the Vedas and Shastras (XVI, 23, 24 : XVII, II, 13, 24). Nor is it against the sanctity of the yajnas (III. 9-15). It upholds the virtue of both. There is therefore no difference between Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and the Bhagwat Gita. If anything, the Bhagwat Gita is a more formidable supporter of counter-revolution than Jaimini's Purva Mimansa could have ever been. It is formidable because it seeks to give to the doctrines of counter-revolution that philosophic and therefore permanent basis which they never had before and without which they would never have survived. Particularly formidable than Jaimini's Purva

Mimansa is the philosophic support which the Bhagwat Gita gives to the central doctrine of counter-revolution—namely Chaturvarna. The soul of the Bhagwat Gita seems to be the defence of Chaturvarna and securing its observance in practice, Krishna does not merely rest content with saying that Chaturvarna is based on Guna-karma but he goes further and issues two positive injunctions. The first injunction is contained in Chapter III verse 26. In this Krishna says: that a wise man should not by counter propaganda create a doubt in the mind of an ignorant person who is follower of Karma kand which of course includes the observance of the rules of Chaturvarna. In other words, you must not agitate or excite people to rise in rebellion against the theory of Karma kand and all that it includes. The second injunction is laid down in Chapter XVIII verses 41-48. In this Krishna tells that every one do the duty prescribed for his Varna and no other and warns those who worship him and are his devotees that they will not obtain salvation by mere devotion but by devotion accompanied by observance of duty laid down for his Varna. In short, a Shudra however great he may be as a devotee will not get salvation if he has transgressed the duty of the Shudra—namely to live and die in the service of the higher classes. The second part of my thesis is that the essential function of the Bhagwat Gita is to give new support to Jaimini at least those portions of it which offer philosophic defence of Jaimini's doctrines — came to be written after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa had been promulgated. The third part of my thesis is that this philosophic defence of the Bhagwat Gita, of the doctrines of counter-revolution became necessary because of the attack to which they were subjected by the revolutionary and rationalistic thought of Buddhism.

I must now turn to the objections that are likely to be raised against the validity of my thesis. I see one looming large before me. I shall be told that I am assuming that the Bhagwat Gita is posterior in time to Buddhism and to Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and that this assumption has no warrant behind it. I am aware of the fact that my thesis runs counter to the most cherished view of Indian scholars all of whom, seem to be more concerned in fixing a very ancient date to the composition of the Bhagwat Gita far anterior to Buddhism and to Jaimini

than in finding out what is the message of the Bhagwat Gita and what value it has as a guide to man's life. This is particularly the case with Mr. Telang and Mr. Tilak. But as Garbe[13] observes "To Telang, as to every Hindu—how much so ever enlightened—it is an article of faith to believe in so high an antiquity of the Bhagwat Gita and where such necessities are powerful criticism indeed comes to an end."

In the words of Prof. Garbe:

"The task of assigning a date to the Gita has been recognized by every one who has earnestly tried to solve the problem, as being very difficult; and the difficulties grow (all the more) if the problem is presented two fold, viz., to determine as well the age of the original Gita as also of its revision. I am afraid that generally speaking, we shall succeed in arriving, not at any certainties, but only at probabilities in this matter."

What are the probabilities? I have no doubt that the probabilities are in favour of my thesis. Indeed so far as I can see there is nothing against it. In examining this question, I propose first to advance direct evidence from the Gita itself showing that it has been composed after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and after Buddhism.

Chapter III verses 9-13 of the Bhagwat Gita have a special significance. In this connection it is true that the Bhagwat Gita does not refer to Jaimini by name: nor does it mention Mimansa by name. But is there any doubt that in Chapter III verses 9-13 the Bhagwat Gita is dealing with the doctrines formulated by Jaimini in his Purva Mimansa? Even Mr. Tilak[14] who believes in the antiquity of the Bhagwat Gita has to admit that here the Gita is engaged in the examination of the Purva Mimansa doctrines. There is another way of presenting this argument. Jaimini preaches pure and simple Karma yoga. The Bhagwat Gita on the other hand preaches *anasakti* karma. Thus the Gita preaches a doctrine which is fundamentally modified. Not only the Bhagwat Gita modifies the Karma yoga but attacks the upholders of pure and simple Karma yoga in somewhat severe terms.[15] If the Gita is prior to Jaimini one would expect Jaimini to take note of this attack of the Bhagwat Gita and reply to it. But we do not find any reference in Jaimini to this *anasakti* karma yoga of the Bhagwat

Gita. Why? The only answer is that this modification came after Jaimini and not before—which is simply another way of saying that the Bhagwat Gita was composed after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa.

If the Bhagwat Gita does not mention Purva Mimansa it does mention by name the Brahma Sutras[16] of Badarayan. This reference to Brahma Sutras is a matter of great significance for it furnishes direct evidence for the conclusion that the Gita is later than the Brahma Sutras.

Mr. Tilak[17] admits that the reference to the Brahma Sutras is a clear and definite reference to the treatise of that name which we now have. It may be pointed out that Mr. Telang[18] discusses the subject in a somewhat cavalier fashion by saying that the treatise "Brahma Sutras" referred to in the Bhagwat Gita is different from the present treatise which goes by that name. He gives no evidence for so extraordinary a proposition but relies on the conjectural statement of Mr. Weber[19]—given in a foot-note of his Treatise in Indian Literature, again without any evidence—that the mention of Brahma Sutras in the Bhagwat Gita "may be taken as an appellative rather than as a proper name." It would not be fair to attribute any particular motives to Mr. Telang for the view he has taken on this point. But there is nothing unfair in saying that Mr. Telang[20] shied at admitting the reference to Brahma Sutra because he saw that Weber had on the authority of Winternitz assigned 500 A.D. to the composition of the Brahma Sutras, which would have destroyed his cherished theory regarding the antiquity of the Bhagwat Gita. There is thus ample internal evidence to support the conclusion that the Gita was composed after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and Badarayana's Brahma Sutras.

Is the Bhagwat Gita anterior to Buddhism? the question was raised by Mr. Telang:

"We come now to another point. What is the position of the Gita in regard to the great reform of Sakya Muni? The question is one of much interest, having regard particularly to the remarkable coincidences between Buddhistic doctrines and the doctrines of the Gita to which we have drawn attention in the footnotes to our translation. But the materials for deciding the question are unhappily not forth coming. Professor Wilson

indeed, thought that there was an allusion to Buddhism in the Gita.[21] but his idea was based on a confusion between the Buddhists and the Charvakas or materialists.[22] Failing that allusion, we have nothing very tangible but the unsatisfactory 'negative argument' based on mere non-mention of Buddhism in the Gita. That argument is not quite satisfactory to my own mind, although, as I have elsewhere pointed out,[23] some of the ground occupied by the Gita is common to it with Buddhism, and although various previous thinkers are alluded to directly or indirectly in the Gita. There is, however, one view of the facts of this question, which appears to me to corroborate the conclusion deducible by means of the negative argument here referred to. The main points on which Buddha's protest against Brahmanism rests, seem to be the true authority of the Vedas and the true view of the differences of caste. On most points of doctrinal speculation, Buddhism is still but one aspect of the older Brahmanism.[24] The various coincidences to which we have drawn attention show that, if there is need to show it. Well now, on both these points, the Gita, while it does not go the whole length which Buddha goes, itself embodies a protest against the views current about the time of its composition. The Gita does not, like Buddhism, absolutely reject the Vedas, but it shelves them. The Gita does not totally root out caste. It places caste on a less untenable basis. One of two hypothesis therefore presents itself as a rational theory of these facts. Either the Gita and Buddhism were alike the outward manifestation of one and the same spiritual upheaval, which shook to its centre the current religion, the Gita being the earlier and less thorough going form of it; or Buddhism having already begun to tell on Brahmanism, the Gita was an attempt to bolster it up, so to say, at its least weak points, the weaker ones being altogether abandoned. I do not accept the latter alternative, because I cannot see any indication in the Gita of an attempt to compromise with a powerful attack on the old Hindu system while the fact that, though strictly orthodox, the author of the Gita still undermines the authority, as unwisely venerated, of the Vedic revelation; and the further fact, that in doing this, he is doing what others also had done before him or about his time; go, in my opinion, a considerable way towards fortifying the results of the negative argument already set forth. To me Buddhism is perfectly intelligible as one outcome

of that play of thought on high spiritual topics, which in its other, and as we may say, less thorough going. manifestation we see in the Upanishads and the Gita.[25]

I have quoted this passage in full because it is typical of all Hindu scholars. Everyone of them is most reluctant to admit that the Bhagwat Gita is anyway influenced by Buddhism and is ever ready to deny that the Gita has borrowed anything from Buddhism. It is the attitude of Prof. Radhakrishnan and also of Tilak. Where there is any similarity in thought between the Bhagwat Gita and Buddhism too strong and too close to be denied, the argument is that it is borrowed from the Upanishads. It is typical of the mean mentality of the counter-revolutionaries not to allow any credit to Buddhism on any account.

The absurdity of these views must shock all those who have made a comparative study of the Bhagwat Gita and the Buddhist Suttas. For if it is true to say that Gita is saturated with Sankhya philosophy it is far more true to say that the Gita is full of Buddhist ideas.[26] The similarity between the two is not merely in ideas but also in language. A few illustrations will show how true it is.

The Bhagwat Gita discusses Bramha-Nirvana.[27] The steps by which one reaches Bramha Nirvana are stated by the Bhagwat Gita to be (1) Shraddha (Faith in oneself); (2) Vyavasaya (Firm determination); (3) Smriti (Rememberance of the goal). (4) Samadhi (Earnest contemplation) and (5) Prajna (Insight or True Knowledge). From where has the Gita borrowed this Nirvana theory? Surely it is not borrowed from the Upanishads. For no Upanishad even mentions the word Nirvana. The whole idea is peculiarly Buddhist and is borrowed from Buddhism. Anyone who has any doubt on the point may compare this Bramha-Nirvana of the Bhagwat Gita with the Buddhist conception of Nirvana as set out in the Mahapari-nibbana Sutta. It will be found that they are the same which the Gita has laid down for Bramha-Nirvana. Is it not a fact that the Bhagwat Gita has borrowed the entire conception of Brahma Nirvana instead of Nirvana for no other reason except to conceal the fact of its having stolen it from Buddhism?

II

Take another illustration. In Chapter VII verses 13-20

there is a discussion as to who is dear to Krishna; one who has knowledge, or one who performs karma or one who is a devotee. Krishna says that the Devotees is dear to him but adds that he must have the true marks of a Devotee. What is the character of a true Devotee? According to Krishna the true devotee is one who practices (1) Maitri; (loving Kindness); (2) Karuna (compassion); (3) Mudita (sympathizing joy) and (4) Upeksa (unconcernedness). From where has the Bhagwat Gita borrowed these qualifications of a perfect Devotee? Here again, the source is Buddhism. Those who want proof may compare the Mahapadana Sutta,[28] and the Tevijja Sutta[29] where Buddha has preached what Bhavanas (mental attitude) are necessary for one to cherish for the training of the heart. This comparison will show that the whole ideology is borrowed from Buddhism and that too word for word.

III

Take a third illustration. In chapter XIII the Bhagwat Gita discusses the subject of Kshetra-Kshetrajna. In verses 7-11 Krishna points out what is knowledge and what is ignorance in the following language:

"Pridelessness (Humility), Unpretentiousness, Non-injury or Harmlessness, Forgiveness, Straight-forwardness, (uprightness), Devotion to Preceptor, Purity, Steadiness, Self-restraint, Desirelessness towards objects of sense, absence of Egoism, Reflection on the suffering and evil of Birth, Death, decrepitude and disease, Non-attachment, Non-identification of oneself with regard to son, wife and home and the rest, Constant even-mindedness on approach of both (what is) agreeable and (what is) disagreable unswerving devotion to Me with undivided meditation of Me, Resort to sequestered spots (contemplation, concentration, in solitude), Distaste for the society of worldly men, Incessant application to the knowledge relating to self, Perception or realisation of the true purport of the knowledge of the Tattvas (Samkhya Philosophy), all this is called 'knowledge'; what is Ajnana (Ignorance) which is the reverse thereof."

Can anyone who knows anything of the Gospel of Buddha deny that the Bhagwat Gita has not in these stanzas reproduced word for word the main doctrines of Buddhism?

In Chapter XIII verses 5, 6, 18, 19, the Bhagwat Gita gives a new metaphorical interpretation of karmas under various heads (1) Yajnas (sacrifices); (2) Dana (Gifts); (3) Tapas (penances); (4) Food and (5) Svadhyaya (Vedic study). What is the source of this new interpretation of old ideas? Compare with this what Buddha is reported to have said in the Majjhima Nikaya I, 286 Sutta XVI. Can anyone doubt that what Krishna says in verses 5, 6, 18, 19 of chapter XVII is a verbatim reproduction of the words of Buddha?

These are only a few illustrations I have selected those of major and doctrinal importance. Those who are interested in pursuing the subject may take up the reference to similarities between Gita and Buddhism given by Telang in the footnotes to his edition of the Bhagwat Gita and satisfy their curiosity. But the illustrations I have given will be enough to show how greatly the Bhagwat Gita is permeated by Buddhistic ideology and how much the Gita has borrowed from Buddhism. To sum up the Bhagwat Gita seems to be deliberately modelled on Buddhist Suttas. The Buddhist Suttas are dialogues. So is the Bhagwat Gita. Buddha's religion offered salvation to women and Shudras. Krishna also comes forward to offer salvation to women and Shudras. Buddhists say, "I surrender to Buddha, to Dhamma and to Sangha." So Krishna says, "Give up all religions and surrender unto Me. "No parallel can be closer than what exists between Buddhism and Bhagwat Gita.

IV

I have shown that Gita is later than Purva Mimansa and also later than Buddhism. I could well stop here. But I feel I cannot. For there still remains one argument against my thesis which requires to be answered. It is the argument of Mr. Tilak. It is an ingenious argument. Mr. Tilak realizes that there are many similarities in ideas and in words between the Bhagwat Gita and Buddhism. Buddhism being earlier than the Bhagwat Gita, the obvious conclusion is that the Bhagwat Gita is the debtor and Buddhism is the creditor. This obvious conclusion is not palatable to Mr. Tilak or for the matter of that to all upholders of counter-revolution. With them it is a question of honour that counter-revolution should not be shown to be indebted to Revolution. To get over this difficulty Mr.

Tilak has struck a new line. He points out the distinction between Hinayana Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism and says, that Mahayana Buddhism was later than Bhagwat Gita and if there are any similarities between the Buddhism and Bhagwat Gita it is due to the borrowing by the Mahayanist from the Bhagwat Gita. This raises two questions. What is the date of the origin of the Mahayana Buddhism? What is the date of the composition of the Bhagwat Gita? The argument of Mr. Tilak is ingenious and clever. But it has no substance. In the first place, it is not original. It is based on certain casual remarks made by Winternitz[30] and by Kern[31] in foot-notes that there are certain similarities between the Bhagwat Gita and the Mahayan Buddhism and that there similarities are the result of Mahayana Buddhism borrowing its ideas from the Bhagwat Gita. Behind these remarks there is no evidence of special research either on the part of Winternitz, Kern or Mr. Tilak. All of them seem to be led away by the assumption that the Bhagwat Gita is earlier than Mahayana Buddhism.

This leads me to examine the question of the date of the Bhagwat Gita particularly with reference to the theory as put forth by Mr. Tilak. Mr Tilak[32] is of opinion that the Gita is part of the Mahabharata and that both have been written by one and the same author named Vyasa and consequently the date of the Mahabharata must be the date of the Bhagwat Gita. The Mahabharata, Mr. Tilak argues, must have been written at least 500 years before the Shaka Era on the ground that the stories contained in the Mahabharata were known to Megasthenes who was in India about 300 B.C.as a Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya. The Shaka Era began in 78 A.D. On this basis it follows that the Bhagwat Gita must have been composed before 422 B.C. This is his view about the date of the composition of the present Gita. According to him, the original Gita must have been some centuries older than Mahabharata. If reliance be placed on the tradition referred to in the Bhagwat Gita that the religion of the Bhagwat Gita was taught by Nara to Narayan in very ancient times. Mr. Tilak's theory as to the date of the composition of the Mahabharata is untenable. In the first place, it assumes that the whole of the Bhagwat Gita and the whole of Mahabharata have been written at one stretch, at one time and by one hand.

There is no warrant for such an assumption, either in tradition, or in the internal evidence of these two treatises. Confining the discussion to the Mahabharata the assumption made by Mr. Tilak is quite opposed to well-known Indian traditions. This tradition divides the composition of the Mahabharata into three stages; (1) Jaya (2) Bharata and (3) Mahabharata and assigns to each part a different author. According to this tradition Vyasa was the author of the Ist edition so to say of the Mahabharata called 'Jaya'. Of the Second Edition called 'Bharata' tradition assigns the authorship to Vaishampayana and that of the Third Edition called Mahabharata to 'Sauti'. That this tradition is well-founded has been confirmed by the researches of Prof. Hopkins based on the examination of internal evidence furnished by the Mahabharata. According to Prof. Hopkins[33] there have been several stages in the composition of the Mahabharata. As has been pointed out by Prof. Hopkins[34] in the first stage it was just a Pandu Epic consisting of plays and legends about heroes who took part in the Mahabharata war without the masses of didactic material. Such a Mahabharata, says Prof. Hopkins, may have come into existence between 400-200 B.C. The second stage was the remaking of the epic by the inclusion of didactic matter and the addition of Puranic material. This was between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D. The third stage is marked when (1) the last books were added to the composition as it stood at the end of the second stage with the introduction of the first book and (2) the swollen Anushasana Parva was separated from Shanti Parva and recognized as a separate book. This happened between 200 to 400 A.D. To these three stages Prof. Hopkins adds a fourth or a final stage of occasional amplification which started from 400 A.D. onwards. In coming to this conclusion Prof. Hopkins has anticipated and dealt with all the arguments advanced by Mr. Tilak such as the mention of Mahabharata in Panini[35] and in the Grihyasutras.[36] The only new pieces of evidence produced by Mr. Tilak which has not been considered by Prof. Hopkins are two. One such piece of evidence consists of the statements which are reported to have been recorded by Megasthenes,[37] the Greek Ambassador to the court of Chandra Gupta Maurya, and the other is the astronomical evidence[38] in the Adi Parva which refers to the Uttarayana starting with the Shravana constellation. The facts adduced by Mr. Tilak as coming from

Megasthenes may not be denied and may go to prove that at the time of Megasthenes i.e. about 300 B.C. a cult of Krishna worship had come into existence among the Sauraseni community. But how can this prove that the Mahabharata had then come into existence? It cannot. Nor can it prove that the legends and stories mentioned by Megasthenes were taken by him from the Mahabharata. For there is nothing to militate against the view that these legends and stories were a floating mass of Saga and that it served as a reservoir both to the writer of the Mahabharata as well as to Greek Ambassador.

Mr. Tilak's astronomical evidence may be quite sound. He is right in saying[39] that "it is stated in the Anugita that Visvamitra started the enumeration of the constellation with Shravana (Ma, Bha. Asva. 44.2, and Adi 71.34). That has been interpreted by commentators as showing that the Uttarayana then started with the Shravana constellation, and no other interpretation is proper. At the date of the Vedanga-Jyotisa, the Uttarayana used to start with the Sun in the Dhanistha constellation. According to astronomical calculations, the date when the Uttarayana should start with the Sun in the Dhanistha constellation is about 1,500 years before the Saka era; and according to astronomical calculations, it takes about a thousand years for the Uttarayana to start one constellation earlier. According to this calculation, the date when the Uttarayana ought to start with the Sun in the Shravana constellation comes to about 500 years before the Saka era. This conclusion would have been proper if it was true that the Mahabharata was one whole piece, written at one time by one author. It has, however, been shown that there is no warrant for such an assumption. In view of this Mr. Tilak's astronomical evidence cannot be used to determine the date of the Mahabharata. It can be used only to determine the date of that part of the Mahabharata which is affected by it—in this case the Adi Parva of the Mahabharata. For these reasons Mr. Tilak's theory as to the date of the composition of the Mahabharata must fall to the ground. Indeed any attempt to fix a single date for a work like the Mahabharata which is a serial story produced in parts at long intervals must be regarded as futile. All that one can say is that the Mahabharata was composed between 400 B.C. to 400 A.D. a conclusion too broad

to be used for the purpose which Mr. Tilak has in view. Even this span seems to some scholars to be too narrow. It is contended[40] that the reference to *Edukas* in the 190th Adhyaya of the Vanaparva has been wrongly interpreted to mean Buddhist Stupas when, as a matter of fact, it refers to the *Idgahas* created by the Muslim invaders for Muslim converts. If this interpretation is correct it would show that parts of the Mahabharata were written about or after the invasions of Mohammed Ghori.

Let me now turn to examine Mr. Tilak's theory as to the date of the composition of the Bhagwat Gita. There are really two propositions underlying his theory. First is that the Gita is part of the Mahabharat, both are written at one time and are the handiwork of one man. His second proposition is that the Bhagwat Gita has been the same what it is today from the very beginning when it first came to be written. To avoid confusion I propose to take them separately.

Mr. Tilak's object in linking the Gita with the Mahabharata in the matter of its composition is quite obvious. It is to have the date of the Mahabharata which he thinks is known to determine the date of the Bhagwat Gita which is unknown. The basis on which Mr. Tilak has tried to establish an integral connection between the Mahabharata and the Bhagwat Gita is unfortunately the weakest part of his theory. To accept that the Gita is a part of the Mahabharata because the author of both is Vyasa—and this is the argument of Mr. Tilak—is to accept a fiction for a fact. It assumes that Vyasa is the name of some particular individual capable of being identified. This is evident from the fact that we have Vyasa as the author of the Mahabharata, Vyasa as the author of the Puranas, Vyasa as the author of Bhagwat Gita and Vyasa as the author of the Bramha Sutras. It cannot therefore be accepted as true that the same Vyasa is the author of all these works separated as they are by a long span of time extending to several centuries. It is well-known how orthodox writers wishing to hide their identity get better authority for their works by the use of a revered name were in the habit of using Vyasa as a *nom-de-plume* or pen name. If the author of the Gita is a Vyasa he must be a different Vyasa. There is another argument which seems to militate against Mr. Tilak's theory of synchroniety

between the composition of the Bhagwat Gita and the Mahabharata. The Mahabharata consists of 18 Parvas. There are also 18 Puranas. It is curious to find that Bhagwat Gita has also 18 Adhyayas. The question is: Why should there be this parallelism? The answer is that the ancient Indian writers regarded certain names and certain numbers as invested with great sanctity. The name Vyasa and the number 18 are illustrations of this fact. But there is more in the fixation of 18 as the chapters of the Bhagwat Gita than is apparent on the face of it. Who set 18 as the sacred number, the Mahabharata or the Gita? If the Mahabharata, then Gita must have been written after the Mahabharata. If it is the Bhagwat Gita, then the Mahabharata must have been written after the Gita. In any case, the two could not have been written at one and the same time.

These considerations may not be accepted as decisive against Mr. Tilak's first proposition. But there is one which I think is decisive. I refer to the relative position of Krishna in the Mahabharata and in the Bhagwat Gita. In the Mahabharata, Krishna is nowhere represented as a God accepted by all. The Mahabharata itself shows the people were not prepared even to give him the first place. When at the time of the Rajasuya Yajna, Dharma offered to give Krishna priority in the matter of honouring the guest, Shishupala—the near relation of Krishna—protested and abused Krishna. He not only charged him with low origin, but also with loose morals, an intriguer who violated rules of war for the sake of victory. So abhorent but so true was this record of Krishna's foul deeds that when Duryodhan flung them in the face of Krishna, the Mahabharata itself in the Gada Parva records that the Gods in heaven came out to listen to the charges made by Duryodhan against Krishna and after listening showered flowers as a token of their view that the charges contained the whole truth and nothing but the truth. On the other hand, the Bhagwat Gita presented Krishna as God omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, pure, loving, essence of goodness. Two such works containing two quite contradictory estimates about one and the same personality could not have been written at one and the same time by one and the same author. It is a pity that Mr. Tilak in his anxiety to give a pre-Buddhist date to the composition of

the Bhagwat Gita should have completely failed to take note of these important considerations.

The second proposition of Mr. Tilak is equally unsound. The attempt to fix a date for the composition of the Bhagwat Gita is nothing but the pursuit of a mirage. It is doomed to failure. The reason is that the Bhagwat Gita is not a single book written by a single author. It consists of different parts written at different times by different authors.

Prof. Garbe is the only scholar who has seen the necessity of following this line of inquiry. Prof. Garbe hold that there are two parts of the Bhagwat Gita one original and one added. I am not satisfied with this statement. My reading of the Bhagwat Gita leads me to the conclusion that there have been four separate parts of Bhagwat Gita. They are so distinct that taking even the present treatise as it stands they can be easily marked off.

(i) The original Gita was nothing more than a heroic tale told or a ballad recited by the bards of how Arjuna was not prepared to fight and how Krishna forced him to engage in battle, how Arjuna yielded and so on. It may have been a romantic story but there was nothing religious or philosophical in it.

This original Gita will be found embedded in Chapter I, Chapter II, and Chapter XI verses 32-33 in which Krishna is reported to have ended the argument:

"Be my tool, carry out my will, don't worry about sin and evil resulting from fighting, do as I tell you, don't be impudent."

This is the argument which Krishna used to compel Arjuna to fight. And this argument of coercion and compulsion made Arjuna to fight. Krishna probably threatened Arjuna with brute force if he did not actually use it. The assumption of Vishva-rupa by Krishna is only different way of describing the use of brute force. On that theory it is possible that the chapter in the present Bhagwat Gita dealing with Vishva-rupa is also a part of the original Bhagwat Gita.

(ii) The first patch on the original Bhagwat Gita is the part in which Krishna is spoken of as Ishvara, the God of the

Bhagwat religion. This part of the Gita is embedded in those verses of the present Bhagwat Gita which are devoted to Bhakti Yoga.

(iii) The second patch on the original Bhagwat Gita is the part which introduces the Sankhya and the Vedanta philosophy as a defence to the doctrines of Purva Mimansa which they did not have before. The Gita was originally only a historical Saga with the cult of Krishna came to be interwoven. The Philosophy portion of the Bhagwat Gita was a later intrusion can be proved quite easily from the nature of the original dialogue and the sequence of it.

In chapter I verses 20-47 Arjuna mentions those difficulties. In chapter II Krishna attempts to meet the difficulties mentioned by Arjuna. There are arguments and counter arguments. Krishna's first argument is contained in verses 2 and 3 in which Krishna tells Arjuna that his conduct is infamous, unbecoming an Arya and that he should not play the part of an effeminate which was unworthy of him. To this, Arjuna gives a reply which is embodied in verses 4 and 8. In verses 4 to 5 he says, "how can I kill Bhishma and Drona who are entitled to highest reverence: it would be better to live by begging than kill them. I do not wish to live to enjoy a kingdom won by killing old revered elders." In verses 6 and 8 Arjuna says: "I do not know which of the two is more meritorious, whether we should vanquish the Kauravas or whether we should be vanquished by them. "Krishna's reply to this is contained in verses 11 to 39 in which he propounds (i) that grief is unjustified because things are imperishable, (ii) that it is a false view that a man is killed when the atman is eternal and (iii) that he must fight because it is the duty of the Kshatriya to fight.

Any one who reads the dialogue will notice the following points:

(1) The questions put by Arjuna are *not* philosophical questions. They are natural questions put by a worldly man faced with worldly problems.

(2) Upto a point Krishna treats them as natural questions and returns to them quite natural replies.

(3) The dialogue takes a new turn. Arjuna after having informed Krishna positively and definitely that he will not fight, suddenly takes a new turn and expresses a doubt whether it is good to kill the Kauravas or be killed by them. This is a deliberate departure designed to give Krishna a philosophical defence of war, uncalled for by anything said by Arjuna.

(4) Again there is a drop in the tone of Krishna from verses 31 to 38. He treats the question as natural and tells him to fight because it is the duty of the Kshatriya to fight.

Anyone can see from this that the introduction of the Vedanta philosophy is quite unnatural and therefore a later intrusion. With regard to the introduction of the Sankhya philosophy the case is quite obvious. Often it is expounded without any question by Arjuna and whenever it has been propounded in answer to a question that question has nothing to do with the war. This shows that the philosophic parts of the Bhagwat Gita are not parts of the original Gita but have been added later on and in order to find a place for them, new, appropriate and leading questions have been put in the mouth of Arjuna which have nothing to do with the mundane problems of war.

(iv) The third patch on the original Bhagwat Gita consists of verses in which Krishna is elevated from the position of Ishwara to that of Parmeshwara. This patch can be easily detected as being Chapters X and XV where Krishna says:

(Quotation not mentioned)*.....

* The relevant verses are:
Whatever being there is glorious, prosperous or powerful, know that to have sprung but from a spark of My splendour. (Chapter X. 41). But what need is there, O Arjuna, for this detailed knowledge? I stand supporting the whole universe with a single fragment of Myself. (Chap. X. 42). There are two Purushas in the world—the Perishable and the Imperishable. All beings are the Perishable, and the Kutastha is called the Imperishable. (Chapter XV. 16). But distinct is the Supreme Purusha called the Highest Self, the indestructable Lord, who pervades and sustains the three worlds. (Chap. XV. 17). As I trascend the Perishable and am even above the Imperishable, therefore am I known in the world as in the Veda as 'Purushotama', the Highest Purusha. (Chap. XV. 18)—Editor.

As I said, to go in for a precise date for the composition of the Bhagwat Gita is to go on a fool's errand and that if an

attempt in that direction is to be of any value, effort must be directed to determine the date of each patch separately. Proceeding in this way it is possible that what I have called the original unphilosophic Bhagwat Gita was part of the first edition of the Mahabharata called Jaya. The first patch on the original Bhagwat Gita in which Krishna is depicted as Ishvara must be placed in point of date sometimes later than Megasthenes when Krishna was only a tribal God.[41] How much later it is not possible to say. But it must be considerably later. For it must be remebered that the Brahmins were not friendly to Krishnaism in the beginning. In fact they were opposed to it.[42] It must have taken some time before the Brahmins could have become reconciled to Krishna worship.[43]

The second patch on the original Bhagwat Gita having refrerence to Sankhya and Vedanta must for reason already given be placed later than the Sutras of Jaimini and Badarayana. The question of the date of these Sutras has carefully been examined by Prof. Jacobi.[44] His conclusion is that these Sutras were composed sometimes between 200 and 450 A.D.

The third patch on the original Bhagwat Gita in which Krishna is raised into Parmeshvara must be placed during the reign of the Gupta Kings. The reason is obvious. Gupta kings made Krishna-Vasudev their family deity as their opponents the Shaka kings had made Mahadeo their family deity. The Brahmins to whom religion has been a trade, who were never devoted to one God but came forward to worship the deity of the ruling race, thought of pleasing their masters by making their family deity into a high and mighty Parmeshvar. If this is correct explanation then this patch on the original Bhagwat Gita must be placed between 400 and 464 A.D.

All this goes to confirm the view that the attempt to place the Bhagwat Gita prior in point of time to Buddhism cannot succeed. It is the result of wishful thinking on the part of those who have inherited a positive dislike to Buddha and his revolutionary gospel. History does not support it. History proves quite abnormally that at any rate those portions of the Bhagwat Gita which have any doctrinal value are considerably later in point of time to the Buddhist canon and the Sutras of Jaimini and Badarayana.

The discussion of the dates not only proves that the Bhagwat Gita is later than Hinayana Buddhism but is also later than Mahayana Buddhism. The impression prevails that Mahayana Buddhism is later in origin. It is supposed to have come into being after A.D. 100 when Kanishka held the third Buddhist Council to settle the dissension in the Buddhist Church. This is absolutely a mistake.[45] It is not true that after the Council a new creed of Buddhism came into existence. What happened is that new names of abuse came into existence for parties which were very old. As Mr. Kimura has shown the Mahayanist is simply another name for the sect of Buddhists known as Mahasanghikas. The sect of Mahasanghikas had come into being very much earlier than is supposed to be the case. If tradition be believed the sect had come into being at the time of the Third Buddhist Council held at Pataliputra 236 years after the death of Buddha i.e., 307 B.C.[46] for settling the Buddhist canon and is said to have led the opposition to the Theravada sect of Buddhism which later on came to be stigmatized as Hinayana (which means those holding to the low path). There could hardly be any trace of Bhagwat Gita when the Mahasanghikas later known as Mahayanists came into being.

Apart from this what have the Mahayanists borrowed from the Bhagwat Gita? Indeed what can they borrow from the Bhagwat Gita? As Mr. Kimura points out the doctrine of every school of Buddhism is mainly concerned at least with three doctrines: (1) Those which deal with cosmic existence; (2) Those which deal with Buddhology; and (3) Those which deal with conception of human life. Mahayana is no exception to this. Except probably on Buddhology the Mahayanists could hardly use the Bhagwat Gita to draw upon. So different is the approach of the two on the other doctrines and even this possibility is excluded by the factor of time.

The foregoing discussion completely destroys the only argument that could be urged against my thesis—namely that the Bhagwat Gita is very ancient, pre-Buddhistic in origin and therefore could not be related to Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and treated as an attempt to give a philosophic defence of his counter-revolutionary doctrines.

To sum up, my thesis is that the Bhagwat Gita is fundamentally a counter-revolutionary treatise of the same

class as Jamini's Purva Mimansa—the official Bible of counter-revolution.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Quoted by Garbe in the Introduction to the Bhagwat Gita (Indian Antiquary 1918 Supplement).
2. Religions of India pp. 390-400.
3. Quoted by Garbe.
4. Introduction to Bhagwat Gita.
5. Bhagwat Gita (S.B.E.) Introduction p. 11.
6. And see, too, Chapter VII, Stanza 17, where the man of knowledge is declared to be 'dear' to Krishna.
7. See His Gita Rahasya (2nd edition Vol. II. Chapter XIV. passim.
8. And see, too, Chapter VII, stanza 17, where the man of knowledge is declared to be 'dear' to Krishna.
9. Bhagwat Gita IV. 13.
10. Bhagwat Gita II. 39-53.
11. Bhagwat Gita II. 47.
12. This is well summed up in Bhagwat Gita II. 48.
13. Introduction (Indian Antiquary Supplement) p. 30
14. Gita Rahasya Vol. II. 916-922.
15. Bhagwat Gita II. 42-46 and XVIII. 66.
16. Bhagwat Gita XIII. 4
17. Gita Rahasya II. p. 749.
18. Bhagwat Gita (S.B.E.) introduction p. 31
19. History of Indian Literature p. 242 f.n.
20. On the other hand, it may be said that Mr. Tilak readily admitted the reference because it was his opinion that Brahma Sutras were a very ancient treatise—see Gita Rahasya Vol. II.
21. Essays on Sanskrit Literature. Vol. III. p. 150.
22. See our remarks on this point in the Introductory Essay to our Gita in verse p. II. seq.
23. Introduction to Gita in English verse p.v. Seq.
24. Cf. Max Muller's Hibbert Lectures, p. 137 Weber's Indian Literature, pp. 288, 289, and Rhys Davids' excellent little volume on Buddhism p. 151: and see also p. 83 of Mr. Davids' book.
25. Cf. Weber's History of Indian Literature, p. 285. In Mr. Davids' Buddhism. p. 94 we have a noteworthy extract from a standard Buddhistic work, touching the existence of the soul. Compare that with the corresponding doctrine in the Gita. It will be found that the two are at one in rejecting the

identity of the soul with the senses & c. The Gita then goes on to admit a soul separate from these. Buddhism rejects that also, and sees nothing but the senses.

26. On this point compare Bhagwat Gita by S.D. Buddhiraja M.A., L.L.B., Chief Judge, Kashmere, At every point the author has attempted to draw attention to textual similarities between the Gita and Buddhism.
27. Max Muller, Mahapari-Nibbana Sutta p. 63.
28. See Mahapadana Sutta, Digha Nikaya.
29. Tevijja Sutta, Digha Nikaya.
30. History of Indian Literature (English Translation) Vol. II. p. 229 foot-note.
31. Manual of Indian Buddhism p. 122. foot-note.
32. Gita Rahasya Vol. II p. 791-800.
33. The Great Epic of India p. 398.
34. The Great Epic of India p. 398.
35. The Great Epic of India p. 395
36. Ibid. p. 390.
37. Gita Rahasya II. p. 79
38. Gita Rahasya II p. 789
39. Ibid p. 789
40. Dharmanand Kausambi—Hindi Sanskriti ani Ahimsa (Marathi) p. 156
41. Dr. Bhandarkar is his 'Saivism and Vaishnavism' says, "If the Vasudeva Krishna worship prevailed in the time of the first Maurya it must have originated long before the establishment of the Maurya dynasty. "This is an unexceptionable statement. But it seems to me that a distinction must be made between Krishna as a tribal God and Krishna as an universalized Ishwara. The date for the first may be what Dr. Bhandarkar suggests but the same cannot be the date for the second. In the Gita we are concerned with the second.
42. See Shamshastri Memorial Volume.
43. The opposition to Krishnaism has been expressed by so late a person as Shankaracharya.
44. The dates of the philosophical Sutras of the Brahmans—in the journal of the American Oriental Society—Vol. XXXI 1911.
45. On the whole subject see—A Historical study of the terms Hinayana and Mahayana and the origin of Mahayana Buddhism—by Ryukan Kimura, Cal. University 1927.
46. This is if the date of Buddha's death is taken to be 543 B.C. and would be 247 B.C. if the date of his death is taken to be 483 B.C.

9

BRAHMANICAL LITERATURE REVISED*

1. Vedanta Sutras

The Vedic literature consists of the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, and the Upanishads. From the point of their subject matter, this literature falls into two classes (1) literature which deals with religious observances and rites and ceremonies technically called Karma Kanda and (2) literature which deals with the knowledge about God to use the Vedic equivalent; the Brahmanas, technically called 'Gnanakanda'. The Vedas and the Brahmanas fall under the first category of literature, while the Aranyakas and the Upanishads fall under the second.

The Vedic literature had grown to enormous proportions and what is important is that, it had grown in a wild manner. Some system, some coordination was necessary to bring order out of this chaos. As a result of the necessity for this coordination, there grew up a branch of inquiry called "Mimansa" i.e., an inquiry into the connected meaning of sacred texts i.e., the Vedic literature. Those who thought it necessary to undertake such a task of systematization and coordination divided themselves into two schools, those who systematized the *Karmakand* portion and those who systematized the *Gnanakand* portion of the Vedic literature. The result was that there grew up two branches of the Mimansa Shastra, one called *Purva Mimansa* and the other *Uttara Mimansa*. As the names suggest, the Purva Mimansa deals with the early portion of the Vedic literature, namely the *Vedas* and the *Bramhanas*. That is why it is called Purva (early) Mimansa. The Uttara Mimansa deals with the later portions of the Vedic literature namely the Aranyakas and Upanishads. That is why it is called Uttara (later) Mimansa.

* Dr. Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 246-257.

The literature connected with the two branches of the Mimansa Shastra is immense. Of this, two collections of Sutras stand out as the principal and leading works in this field of Mimansa. The authorship of one is attributed to Jaimini and that of the other is ascribed to Badarayana. Jaimini's Sutras deal with 'Karmakanda'[1] and Badarayana's deal with 'Gnanakanda'. There is no doubt that there were prior to Jaimini and Badarayana, other authors who had written treatises on these subjects. Nonetheless the sutras of Jaimini and Badarayana are taken as the standard works on the two Branches of the Mimansa Shastra.

Although the Sutras of both relate to that branch of inquiry called Mimansa, Jaimini's sutras are called *Mimansa Sutras*[2] while those of Badarayana called *Vedanta Sutras*. The term 'Vedanta' is taken to mean "the end of the Veda", or the doctrines set forth in the closing chapter of the Vedas which comprise the Upanishads and as the Upanishads constitute "the final aim of the Vedas," the Sutras of Badarayana which go to systematize and coordinate them have come to be called *Vedanta Sutras*,[3] or the doctrines set forth in the closing chapter of the Vedas. This is the origin of the Vedanta Sutras.

Who is this Badarayana? Why did he compose these Sutras and when did he compose them? Beyond the name nothing is known about Badarayana.[4] It is not even certain that it is the real name of the author. There is a considerable uncertainty regarding the authorship of these Sutras even among his chief commentators. Some say that the author is Badarayana. Others say that the author of the Sutras is Vyasa. The rest say that Badarayana and Vyasa are one and the same person. Such is the bewildering conflict of opinion regarding the author of the Sutras.

Why did he compose Sutras? That the Brahmins should undertake to systematize the Karmakand portion of the Vedic literature one can quite understand. The Bramhins were deeply concerned with the Karmakand. Their very existence, their livelihood depended upon the systematization of the Karmakand portion of the Vedic literature. The Brahmins on the other hand had no interest in the 'Gnankand' portion of the Vedic literature. Why should they have made an attempt to

systematize it? The question has not even been raised. But it is an important question and the answer to that must also be very important. Why the question is important and what the answer is I shall discuss later on.

There are two other questions with regard to the Vedanta Sutras. First is this. Is this work theological in character or is purely philosophical in its nature? Or is it an attempt to tie down pure philosophy to the apron strings of established theology and thereby to make it innocuous and harmless. The other question relates to the commentaries on the Vedanta Sutras. There have been altogether five commentaries on the Vedanta Sutras by five eminent men all of whom are called Acharyas (doctors of learning) by reason of their intellectual eminence. They are (1) Shankaracharya (788 A.D. to 820 A.D.), (2) Ramanujacharya (1017 A.D. to 1137 A.D.), (3) Nimbarkacharya (died about 1162 A.D.). (4) Madhavacharya (1197-1276) and (5) Vallabhacharya (born 1417 A.D.). The commentaries of these Acharyas on the Vedanta Sutras have become far more important than the Vedanata Sutras. The point of some significance is that on the text of one and the same collection of the Vedanta Sutras, an attempt has been made by these five Acharyas to found five different systems of thought. According to Shankara, the Vedanta Sutras teach absolute monism. According to Ramanuja, qualified monism. According to Nimbarka, monodualism. According to Madhava, dualism and according to Vallabha, pure monism. I will not discuss here what these terms mean. All I want to say is why should five different schools should have arisen as a result of five different interpretations of the same collection of Sutras. Is it a mere matter of grammar? Or is there any other purpose behind these several interpretations. There is also another question which arises out of the plurality of commentaries,. While there are five different commentaries each propounding five different ways of looking at God and the individual soul, really speaking there are only two, the view taken by Shankaracharya and the view taken by the other four. For though the four differ among themselves, they are all united in their opposition to Shankaracharya on two points (1) The complete oneness between God and individual soul and (2) the world is an illusion. Here comes the third question. Why did

Shankaracharya propound so unique a view of the Vedanta Sutras of Badarayana? Is it the result of a critical study of the Sutras? Or is it a wishful interpretation designed to support a preconceived purpose?

I am only raising this question. I don't propose to deal with them here. Here I am concerned with the age of this literature, is it Pre-Buddhist or Post-Buddhist.

As to the date of the composition of the Vedanta Sutras the initial difficulty is that like the Bhagwat Gita it has also gone through several recensions. According to some[5] there have been three recensions of the Vedanta Sutras. That being so, nothing definite can be said regarding the date of its composition[6] The views expressed are only approximations. There can be no doubt that the Vedanta Sutras are composed after the rise of Buddhism for the Sutras do allude to Buddhism. They must not be after Manu for Manu refers to them in his Smriti. Prof. Keith holds that they must have been written about 200 A.D. and Prof. Jacobi believes that the Sutras must have been composed between 200 A.D. and 450 A.D.

2. Mahabharata

The question of determining the date of the Composition of the Mahabharata is next to impossible. Only an attempt to fix the period of its composition can be made. The Mahabharata has undergone three editions and with each editor the title and subject matter has changed. In its original form it was known as *Jaya* Triumph. This original name occurs even in the third edition, both in the beginning as well in the end. The original edition of the book known as *Jaya* was composed by one Vyas. In its second edition it was known as Bharata. The editor of this second edition was one Vaishampayana. Vaishampayana's Edition was not the only second edition of the Bharata. Vyas had many pupils besides Vaishampayana; Sumantu, Jaimini, Paila and Shuka were his other four pupils. They all had learned at the feet of Vyas. Each one of them produced his own edition. Thus there were four other editions of Bharata. Vaishampayana recast the whole and brought out his own version. The third Editor is Sauti. He recast Vaishampayana's version of Bharata. Sauti's version ultimately came to have the name of *Mahabharata*. The book has grown both in size

and in the subject matter as well. The 'Jaya' of Vyas was a small work having not more than 8,800 Shlokas. In the hands of Vaishampayana it grew into 24,000 verses. Sauti expanded it to contain 96,836 Shlokas. As to subject matter, the original as composed by Vyasa was only a story of the war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas. In the hands of Vaishampayana the subject became two-fold. To the original story there was added the sermon. From a purely historical work it became a diadactic work aiming to teach a right code of social, moral and religious duties. Sauti the last Editor made it an all embracing repository of legendary lore. All the smaller floating legends and historical stories which existed independently of the Bharata were brought together by Sauti so that they might not be lost or that they may be found together. Sauti had another ambition, that was to make the Bharata a storehouse of learning and knowledge. This is the reason why he added sections on all branches of knowledge, such as politics, geography, archery etc. Taking into account Sauti's habit of repetition it is no wonder that the Bharata in his hand became Mahabharata.

Now as to the date of its composition. There is no doubt that the war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas is a very ancient event. But that does not mean that the composition of Vyas is as old as the event or contemporaneous with the event. It is difficult to assign specific dates to the different editions. Taking it as a whole Prof. Hopkins says:[7]

"The time of the whole Mahabharata generally speaking may then be from 200-400 A.D. This, however, takes into account neither subsequent additions, such as we know, to have been made in later times, nor the various recasting in verbal form, which may safely be assumed to have occurred at the hands of successive copyists."

But there are other circumstances which definitely point to a later date.

The Mahabharata contains a reference to the Huns. It was Skandagupta who fought the Huns and defeated them in or about the year 455. Notwithstanding this, the invasions of the Huns continued till 528 A.D. It is obvious that the Mahabharata was being written about this time or thereafter.

There are other indications pointed out by Mr. Kausambi[8] which suggest a much later date. The Mahabharata refers to the Mlenchhas or the Muslims. In the 190th Adhyaya of the Vana Parva of the Mahabharata, there is a verse 29 wherein the author says that "the whole world will be Islamic. All Aryan rites and ceremonies and religious celebrations will cease". This is a direct reference to the Muslims and although the verse speaks of what is to happen in the future, the Mahabharata being a Purana must as in the case of the Purana be taken to speak of the event that has happened. This verse so interpreted shows that the Mahabharata was being written after the date of the Muslim invasions of India.

There are other references which point to the same conclusion.

In the same Adhyaya verse 59 it is said that "Oppressed by the Vrashalas, the Brahmins struck with fear, and finding no one to protect them will roam all over the world groaning and crying in agony".

The Vrashalas referred to in this verse cannot be the Buddhists. There is no particle of evidence that the Brahmins were ever oppressed. On the contrary, the evidence is that the Brahmins during the Buddhist regimes were treated with the same liberality as the Buddhist Bhikshus. The reference to the Vrashalas which means the uncultured must be to the Islamic invaders. If that is so, then part of the Mahabharata was certainly composed after the Muslim invasions of India began.

There occur other verses in the same Adhyaya of the Vanaparva which points to the same conclusion. They are 65, 66 and 67. In these verses it is said that "Society will become disarranged. People will worship *Yedukas*. They will boycott Gods. The Shudras will not serve the twice born. The whole world will be covered with Yedukas. The Yug will come to an end."

Great significance attaches to the term *Yedukas*. By some it has been taken to mean a Buddhist *Chaitya*, on the ground that *Yeduka* means bone and particularly the bones of Buddha and subsequently Chaitya because a Chaitya contains the bones of the Buddha. But according to Mr. Kausambi[8] this is

wrong. Nowhere either in the Buddhist literature or in the Vedic literature is the word Yeduka used in the sense of 'Chaitya'. On the contrary, according to Amarkosh as commented upon by Maheshwar Bhatt, the word Yeduka means a wall which contains a wooden structure to give it strength. So understood Kausambi contends that the word Yeduka must mean 'Idgaha' of the Musalmans before which they say their prayers. If this is a correct interpretation then it is obvious that part of the Mahabhartata was written after the Muslim invasions, particularly after those of Mohamad Ghori. The first Muslim invasion took place in 712 A.D. under Ibne Kassim. He captured some of the towns in Northern India but did not cause much destruction of Temples and Viharas and massacred priests of both the religions. But he did not engage himself in building Mosques or Idgahas. That was done by Mohamad Ghori. So that, it can well be said, that the writing of the Mahabharata was going on till 1200 A.D.

3. Ramayana

It is a fact that like Mahabharata, the Ramayana has also gone through three editions. There are two sorts of references to the Ramayana in the Mahabharata. In one case the reference is to Ramayana without any mention of the author. The other reference is to the Ramayana of Valmiki. But the present Ramayana is not the Ramayana of Valmiki.[9] In the opinion of Mr. C.V. Vaidya[10]:

> "That the present Ramayana, even as it is approved and adopted by the searching and all-respected commentator Kataka, is not the Ramayana originally written by Valmiki, not even the most orthodox thinker will be disposed to doubt. Whoever even cursorily reads the poem, cannot but be struck with the inconsistencies, the severances of connections, juxtapositions of new and old ideas which abound so greatly in the present Ramayana, whether we take the Bengal or the Bombay text of it. And one cannot but come to the conclusion that the Ramayana of Valmiki was substantially reconstructed at some subsequent date."

As in the case of the Mahabharata, there has been an accretion to the subject mater of the Ramayana. Originally it

was just a story of the war between Rama and Ravana over the abduction of Rama's wife Sita by Ravana. In the second edition it became a story with a sermon. From a purely historical work, it also became a didactic work aiming to teach a right code of Social, Moral and Religious duties. When it assumed the form of a third edition, it was again, like the Mahabharata, made a repository of legends, knowledge, learning, philosophy and other arts and sciences.

With regard to the date of the composition of the Ramayana, one proposition is well established namely that the episode of Rama is older than the episode of the Pandus. But that the composition of the Ramayana has gone on peripassu along with the composition of the Mahabharata. Portions of Ramayana may be earlier than the Mahabharata. But there can be no doubt that a great part of the Ramayana was composed after a great part of the Mahabharata had already been composed.[11]

4. Puranas

The Puranas[12] today number 18. This is however not the original number. According to tradition, there is no reason to doubt, there was only one Purana to start with. Tradition alleges that this Purana was older than the Vedas. The Atharva Veda refers to this *Purana* and the Bramhanda Purana says that it is more ancient than the Vedas. It was a lore which the King was expected to know for the Satapada,. Bramhana says the Adhvaryu was required to recite the Purana to the King on the 10th day of the Yajna.

The origin of the 18 Puranas is attributed to Vyas who it is said recast the original single Purana and by additions and substractions made 18 out of one. The making of the 18 Puranas is thus the second stage in the evolution of the Puranas. The edition of each of these 18 Puranas as published or uttered by Vyasa is called the Adi[13] Purana i.e., the original edition as brought out by Vyas. After Vyas composed these 18 Puranas, he taught them to his disciple Romaharsana. Romaharsana prepared his own edition of the Puranas and taught it to his six disciples. Romaharsana's edition of the Puranas thus became the third edition of the Puranas. Of the six disciples of Romaharasana, three: Kasyapa, Savarni and Vaisampayana,

made three separate editions which may be called the fourth edition of the Puranas which we call by their names. According to the Bhavishya Purana, the Puranas came to be revised sometime during the reign of King Vikramaditya.[14]

As to the subject matter of the Puranas. The *Purana* from the oldest time is a recognised department of knowledge. For instance it was distinguished from Itihas or history. By Itihas what was understood was past occurrences connected with a ruling king. By *Akhyana* was meant the recital of an event the occurance of which one had witnessed. By *Upakhyana* was meant the recital of something one has heard. *Gathas* meant songs about dead ancestors and about nature and universe.

Kalpashudhi[15] are ancient ways of acting regarding Shraddha and Kalpa.[16] The Purana was distinguished from all these branches of knowledge. The Purana was concerned with five subjects (1) Sarga (2) Prati Sarga (3) Vamsha (4) Manvantar and (5) Vamshacharitra. Sarga means creation of the universe, Pratisarga means the dissolution of the Universe. Vamsha means Genealogy, Manvanatar means the Ages of the different Manus, particularly the fourteen successive Manus who were the progenitors or sovereigns of the Earth. Vamshacharitra means the account of royal dynasties.

There has been a considerable addition made in the scope and subject matter of the Puranas. For the Puranas which we have are no longer confined to these subjects. In addition to these subjects they contain other subjects which fall entirely outside their prescribed scope. Indeed there has been such a change in the fundamental notion regarding the scope of the Puranas so that some of them do not contain any treatment of the regular subjects but deal wholly with the new or extra subjects. The extra subjects include the following main topics:

(I) Smriti Dharma which include discussion of:

(1) Varnashrama-dharma. (2) Achara, (3) Ahnika, (4) Bhashyabhasya, (5) Vivaha, (6) Asaucha, (7) Shradha (8) Dravya-Suddhi, (9) Pataka, (10) Prayaschitta, (11) Naraka, (12) Karma Vipaka and (13) Yuga Dharma.

(II) Vrata Dharma—Observance of holy vows and holy days.

(III) Kshetra Dharma-Pilgrimages to holy places, and

(IV) Dana Dharma—Gifts to holy persons.

In addition to this, there are two other topics, the new subject matter with which one finds the Puranas to be deeply concerned.

The first of these two topics relates to sectarian worship. The Puranas are votaries of a particular deity and advocate the cause of a particular deity and the sect devoted to his worship. Five[17] Puranas advocate worship of Vishnu, Eight[18] worship of Shiva, One[19] worship of Brahma, One[20] worship of Surya. Two worship of Devi and One worship of Ganesh.

The second topic which the Puranas have made a part of their subject matter is the history of the Avatars of the God. The Puranas make a distinction between identification of two Gods and the incarnation of God. In the case of identification, the theory is that the God is one although he has two names. In the case of an incarnation, God becomes another being of the man or brute and does something miraculous. In reading this history of incarnations the fruitful source is Vishnu. For it is only Vishnu who has taken Avatars from time to time and done miraculous deeds and we find in the Puranas this new topic discussed in all its elaborate details.

It is no wonder if by the addition of these new subjects, the Puranas have been transformed out of recognition.

There is one other matter regarding the authorship of the Puranas which is noteworthy. It relates to the change in the authorship of Puranas. Among the ancient Hindus, there were two separate sections among the literary class. One section consisted of the *Brahmins* and another section called *Sutas* who were non-Brahmins. Each was in charge of a separate department of, literature. The Sutas had the monopoly of the Puranas. The Brahmins had nothing to do with the composition or the reciting of the Puranas. It was exclusively reserved for the Sutas and the Brahmins had nothing to do with it. Though the Sutas had specialized themselves in the making and the reciting of the Puranas, although they had acquired a hereditary and a prescriptive right to compose and recite the Puranas, there came a time when the Sutas were

ousted from this profession by Brahmins who took it into their own hands and made a monopoly of it in their own favour. Thus there was a change in the authorship of the Puranas. Instead of the Sutas, it is the Brahmins who became their authors.[21]

It is probably when the Puranas fell into the hands of the Brahmins that the Puranas have been finally edited and recast to make room for the new subjects. The editing and recasting has been of a very daring character. For in doing so they have added fresh chapters, substituted new chapters for old chapters and written new chapters with old names. So that by this process some Puranas retained their earlier materials, some lost their early materials, some gained new materials and some became totally new works.

The determination of the date of the composition of the

	Puranas	Dates of composition
1.	Markendeya	Between 200 and 600 A.D.
2.	Vayu	Between 200 and 500 A.D.
3.	Bramhanda	Between 200 and 500 A.D.
4.	Vishnu	Between 100 and 350 A.D.
5.	Matsya	Part about 325 A.D. Part about 1100 A.D.
6.	Bhagwat	Between 500 and 600 A.D.
7.	Kurma	Between 550 and 1000 A.D.
8.	Vamana	Between 700 and 1000 A.D.
9.	Linga	Between 600 and 1000 A.D.
10.	Varaha	Between 800 and 1500 A.D.
11.	Padma	Between 600 and 950 A.D.
12.	Brahanaradiya	Between 875 and 1000 A.D.
13.	Agni	Between 800 and 900 A.D.
14.	Garuda	Between 850 and 1000 A.D.
15.	Bramha	Between 900 and 1000 A.D.
16.	Skanda	After 700 A.D.
17.	Bramha Vaivrata	After 700 A.D.
18.	Bhavishya	After 500 A.D.

Puranas is a problem which has hardly been tackled. All history written by the Brahmins is history without dates and

the Puranas are no exception. The date of the Puranas has to be determined by circumstantial evidence co-related with events the dates of which are well settled. The dates of the composition of the different Puranas have not been examined as closely as those of the other parts of the Brahminic literature. Indeed scholars have paid no attention to the Puranas at all certainly nothing like what they have done in the matter of the Vedic literature. Mr. Hazara's is the only work I know of in which an attempt is made in the matter of determining the date of the composition of the Puranas. I give above the dates of the Puranas as found by him.

No more precise date can be fixed for Puranas at any rate for the present. New research in the field may narrow the higher and lower limits of their composition. The difference will only be a difference of degree. It will not be one of subversion of Eras.

This short survey is enough to remove any doubt as to the age of this literature that it is post-Buddhistic. The survey establishes one more point of great significance. This literature arose during the period subsequent to the triumph of Brahmins under the leadership of Pushyamitra. The survey brings out one other point. Vyas writes Mahabharata. Vyas tells Bhagwat Gita, and Vyas also writes the Puranas. Mahabharata contains 18 Parvas, the Gita has 18 Adhyayas and the Puranas number 18. Is all this an Accident? Or is it the result of a design planned and worked out in concert? We must wait and see.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. As a matter of fact the systematization of the Karmakand portion of the Vedic literature gave rise to two kinds of works (1) Kalpa Sutras and (2) Purva Mimansa Sutras. The former give only a short and concise description of the rituals enjoined in the Brahamanas; while the latter enunciate and support the general principle which the author of the Kalpa Sutra must follow if he wishes to render his rules strictly conformable to the teaching of the Vedas.
2. They are also called Purva Mimansa or *Karma Mimansa.*
3. They also go by various other names such as Uttara Mimansa Sutras, Brahma Sutras or Saririka Sutras or Saririka Mimansa Sutras.
4. The same is true of Jaimini. As Kane says "Hardly anything is known about Jaimini. There is a Brahmana, a Srauta Sutra and a Grihasutra ascribed to Jaimini. But it is hardly likely that they are the works of the

founder of the Puravaminansa. In the *tarpana* in the Asvalayan Grihya Sutra Jaimini occurs along with Sumantu. Vaishyampayana. In the Bhagwat Purana Jaimini is said to be the teacher of Sumantu and a promulgator of Samaveda. The Panchatantra tells us that an elephant crushed to death Jaimini—the author of the Mimansa "A brief sketch of the Purva Mimansa System." p. 12.

5. See Belvalkar, Basu Malick Lectures on Vedanta Lecture IV.
6. See Radhakrishnan—Indian Philosophy Vol. II. p. 430 where the relevant evidence is collected together.
7. Prof. Hopkins, "The Great Epic of India". P. 389.
8. Hindi Sanskriti Ani Ahimsa (Marathi).
9. Hopkins, "The Great Epic of India." p. 62.
10. The Riddle of the Ramayana. Chap. II. p. 6.
11. See the Appendix A to Hopkins "The Great Epic of India" for Parallel phrases in the two epics.
12. For the account of the Puranas which follows I have drawn upon Kale's Purananirikshana (Marathi) and Partigar's Ancient Indian Historical Tradition.
13. Adi Purana does not mean a separate Purana of that name. It means the first edition of each of the 18 Puranas,.
14. Who is Vikramaditya? No one can say.
15. Mr. Hazara speaks of Kaplajokti (instead of Kalpashudhi) which means lore that has come down through ages—see chronology of Puranas p. 4.
16. The word Kalpa is used in various senses (1) Practicable, (2) Proper (3) Able, Competent. The word *Kalpa* is also used in various senses (1) A Sacred rule (2) A prescribed alternative (3) Mode of performing religious rites (4) End of the world, Universal destruction (5) A day of the Brahma Yuga (6) Medical treatment of the sick and (7) One of the six Vedangas, that which lays down the ritual and prescribes rules for ceremonies and sacrificial acts.
17. (1) Vishnu (2) Bhagwat (3) Narada (4) Vaman and (5) Garuda.
18. (1) Shiva (2) Brahma (3) Linga (4) Varaha (5) Skanda (6) Matsya (7) Kurma (8) Bramhanda.
19. Padma.
20. Agni.
21. Partiger.

10

BRAHMANISM REFORMED*

I

To the question whether the Hindus ever ate beef, every Touchable Hindu, whether he is a Brahmin or a non-Brahmin, will say 'no, never'. In a certain sense, he is right. From times no Hindu has eaten beef. If this is all that the Touchable Hindu wants to convey by his answer there need be no quarrel over it. But when the learned Brahmins argue that the Hindus not only never ate beef but they always held the cow to be sacred and were always opposed to the killing of the cow, it is impossible to accept their view.

What is the evidence in support of the construction that the Hindus never ate beef and were opposed to the killing of the cow?

There are two series of references in the Rig Veda on which reliance is placed. In one of these, the cow is spoken of as *Aghnya*. They are Rig Veda 1.164, 27; IV.1.6; V. 82-8; VII.69. 71; X.87. *Aghnya* means 'one who does not deserve to be killed'. From this, it is argued that this was a prohibition against the killing of the cow and that since the Vedas are the final authority in the matter of religion, it is concluded that the Aryans could not have killed the cows, much less could they have eaten beef. In another series of references the cow is spoken of as sacred. They are Rig Veda VI.28.1.8 and VIII. 101.15. In these verses the cow is addressed as Mother of Rudras, the Daughter of Vasus, the Sister of the Adityas and the Centre of Nectar. Another reference on the subject is in Rig Veda VIII. 101.16. where the cow is called Devi (Goddess).

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* The Untouchables, New Delhi, 1948, pp. 86-121; Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 7, pp. 323-349.

Reliance is also placed on certain passages in the Brahmanas and Sutras.

There are two passages in the Satapatha Brahmana which relate to animal sacrifice and beef-eating. One is at III.1.2.21 and reads as follows:-

> "He (the Adhvaryu) then makes him enter the hall. Let him not eat (the flesh) of either the cow or the ox, for the cow and the ox doubtless support everything here on earth. The gods spake, 'verily, the cow and the ox support everything here; come, let us bestow on the cow and the ox whatever vigour belonged to other species (of animals); and therefore the cow and the ox eat most. Hence were one to eat (the flesh) of an ox or a cow, there would be, as it were, an eating of everything, or, as it were, a going to the end (or, to destruction)... Let him therefore not eat (the flesh) of the cow and the ox"

The other passage is at 1, 2, 3, 6. It speaks against animal sacrifice and on ethical grounds.

A similar statement is contained in the Apastambha Dharma Sutra at 1, 5, 17, 29. Apastambha lays a general embargo on the eating of cow's flesh.

Such is the evidence in support of the contention that the Hindus never ate beef. What conclusion can be drawn from this evidence?

So far as the evidence from the Rig Veda is concerned the conclusion is based on a misreading and misunderstanding of the texts. The adjective *Aghnya* applied to the cow in the Rig Veda means a cow that was yielding milk and therefore not fit for being killed. That the cow is venerated in the Rig Veda is of course true. But this regard and venerations of the cow are only to be expected from an agricultural community like the Indo-Aryans. This application of the utility of the cow did not prevent the Aryan from killing the cow for purposes of food. Indeed the cow was killed because the cow was regarded as sacred. As observed by Mr. Kane:

> "It was not that the cow was not sacred in Vedic times, it was because of her sacredness that it is ordained in the Vajasaneyi Samhita that beef should be eaten."[1]

That the Aryans of the Rig Veda did kill cows for purposes of food and ate beef is abundantly clear from the Rig Veda itself. In Rig Veda (X.86.14) Indra says:- "They cook for one 15 plus twenty oxen." The Rig Veda (X.91.14) says that for Agni were sacrificed horses, bulls, oxen, barren cows and rams. From the Rig Veda (X.72.6) it appears that the cow was killed with a sword or axe.

As to the testimony of the Satapatha Bramhana, can it be said to be conclusive? Obviously, it cannot be. For there are passages in the other Bramhanas which give a different opinion.

To give only one instance. Among the Kamyashtis set forth in the Taittiriya Bramhana, not only the sacrifice of oxen and cows are laid down, but we are even told what kind and description of oxen and cows are to be offered to what deities. Thus, a dwarf ox is to be chosen for sacrifice to Vishnu; a drooping horned bull with a blaze on the forehead to Indra as the destroyer of Vritra: a black cow to Pushan; a red cow to Rudra; and so on. The Taittiriya Bramhana notes another sacrifice called *Panchasaradiya-seva*, the most important element of which was the immolation of seventeen five year old humpless, dwarf-bulls, and as many dwarf heifers under three year-old.

As against the statement of the Apastambha Dharma Sutra, the following points may be noted.

First is the contrary statement contained in that Very Sutra. At 14, 15, 29, the Sutra says:

> "The cow and the bull are sacred and therefore should be eaten".

The second is the prescription of Madhuparka contained in the Grahya Sutras. Among the Aryans the etiquette for receiving important guests had become settled into custom and had become a ceremony. The most important offering was Madhuparka. A detailed descriptions regarding Madhuparka are to be found in the various Grahya Sutras. According to most of the Grahya Sutras there are six persons who have a right to be served with Madhuparka namely; (1) Ritwija or the Brahmin called to perform a sacrifice, (2) Acharya, the teacher, (3) The bridegroom, (4) The King, (5) The Snatak, the student

who has just finished his studies at the Gurukul and (6) Any person who is dear to the host. Some add Atithi to this list. Except in the case of Ritvija, King and Acharya, Madhuparka is to be offered to the rest once in a year. To the Ritvija, King and Acharya it is to be offered each time they come.

What was this Madhuparka made of? There is divergence about the substances mixed in offering Madhuparka. Asv.gr and Ap.gr. (13.10) prescribe a mixture of honey and curds or clarified butter and curds. Others like Par.gr.13 prescribe a mixture of three (curds, honey and butter). Ap.gr.(13.11-12) states the view of some that those three may be mixed or five (those three with fried *yava* grain and barley). Hir.gr.I., 12, 10-12 give the option of mixing three of five (curds, honey, ghee, water and ground grain). The Kausika Sutra (92) speaks of nine kinds of mixtures, viz., *Brahma* (honey and curds). *Aindra* (of payasa), *Saumya* (curds and ghee), *Pausna* (ghee and mantha), *Sarasvata* (milk and ghee), *Mausala* (wine and ghee, this being used only in Sautramanai and Rajasuya sacrifices), *Parivrajaka* (sesame oil and oil cake). The Madhava gr.I.9.22 says that the Veda declares that the Madhuparka must not be without flesh and so it recommends that if the cow is let loose, goat's meat or payasa (rice cooked in milk) may be offered; the Hir.gr.1.13,.14 says that other meat should be offered; Baud.gr. (1.2.51-54) says that when the cow is let off, the flesh of a goat or ram may be offered or some forest flesh (of a deer, etc.) may be offered, as there can be no Madhuparka without flesh or if one is unable to offer flesh one may cook ground grains.

Thus the essential element in Madhuparka is flesh and particularly cow's flesh.

The killing of cow for the guest had grown to such an extent that the guest came to be called 'Go-ghna' which means the killer of the cow. To avoid this slaughter of the cows the Ashvalayana Grahya Sutra (1.24.25) suggests that the cow should be let loose when the guest comes so as to escape the rule of etiquette.

Thirdly, reference may be made to the ritual relating to disposal of the dead to counter the testimony of the Apastambha Dharma Sutra. The Sutra says[2]:

1. He should then put the following (sacrificial) implements (on the dead body).
2. Into the right hand the (spoon called) Guhu.
3. Into the left the (other spoon called) Upabhrit.
4. On his right side the wooden sacrificial sword called *Sphya*, on his left side the Agnihotrahavani (i.e., the laddle with which the Agnihotra oblations are sacrified).
5. On his chest the (big sacrificial laddle called) Dhruva. On his head the dishes. On his teeth the pressing stones.
6. On the two sides of his nose, the two smaller sacrificial laddles called *Sruvas*.
7. Or, if there is only one (Sruva), breaking it (in two pieces).
8. On his two ears the two Prasitraharanas (i.e., the vessels into which the portion of the sacrificial food belonging to the Brahmin) is put.
9. Or, if there is only one (Prasitraharana), breaking it (in two pieces).
10. On his belly the (vessel called) Patri.
11. And the cup into which the cut-off portion (of the sacrificial food) are put.
12. On his secret parts the (staff called) Samy.
13. On his thighs two kindling woods.
14. On his legs the mortar and the pestle.
15. On his feet the two baskets.
16. Or, if there is only one (basket), breaking it in two pieces.
17. Those of the implements which have a hollow (into which liquids can be poured) are filled with sprinkled butter.
18. The son (of the deceased person) should take the under and the upper mill-stone for himself.

19. And the implements made of copper, iron and earthenware.

20. Taking out the omentum of the she-animal he should cover therewith the head and the mouth (of the dead person) with the verse, 'But on the armour (which will protect thee) against Agni, by that which comes from the cows.' (Rig Veda. X.16.7).

21. Taking out the kidneys of the animal he should lay them into the hands (of the dead body) with the verse, escape the two hounds, the sons of Sarma (Rig Veda X. 14.10) the right kidney into the right hand and the left into the left hand,.

22. The heart of the animals he puts on the heart of the deceased.

23. And two lumps of flour or rice according to some teachers.

24. Only if there are no kidneys according to some teachers.

25. Having distributed the whole (animal), limb by limb (placing its different limbs on the corresponding limbs of the deceased) and having covered it with its hide, he recites when the Pranita water is carried forward (the verse), 'Agni do not overturn this cup,' (Rig Veda, X.16.8).

26. Bending his left knee he should sacrifice Yugya oblation into the Dakshina fire with the formulas 'To Agni Svaha, to Kama Svaha, to the world Svaha, to Anumati Svaha.'

27. A fifth (oblation) on the chest of the deceased with the formula 'from this one verily thou has been born. May he now be born out of thee. To the heaven worlds Svaha.'

From the above passage quoted from the Ashvalayan Grahya Sutra it is clear that among the ancient Indo-Aryans when a person died, an animal had to be killed and the parts of the animal were placed on the appropriate parts of the dead body before the dead body was burned.

Such is the state of the evidence on the subject of cow-killing and beef-eating. Which part of it is to be accepted as true? The correct view is that the testimony of the Satapatha Brahmana and the Apastambha Dharma Sutra in so far as it supports the view that Hindus were against cow-killing and beef-eating, are merely exhortations against the excesses of cow-killing and not prohibitions against cow-killing. Indeed the exhortations prove that cow-killing and eating of beef had become a common practice. That notwithstanding these exhortations cow-killing and beef-eating continued. That most often they fell on deaf ears is proved by the conduct of Yajnavalkya, the great Rishi of the Aryans. The first passage quoted above from the Satapatha Brahmana was really addressed to Yajnavalkya as an exhortation. How did Yajnavalkya respond? After listening to the exhortation this is what Yajnavalkya said:

"I, for one, eat it, provided that it is tender"

That the Hindus at one time did kill cows and did eat beef is proved abundantly by the description of the Yajnas given in the Buddhist Sutras which relate to periods much later than the Vedas and the Brahmanas. The scale on which the slaughter of cows and animals took place was colossal. It is not possible to give a total of such slaughter on all accounts committed by the Brahmins in the name of religion. Some idea of the extent of this slaughter can however be had from references to it in the Buddhist literature. As an illustration reference may be made to the Kutadanta Sutta in which Buddha preached against the performance of animal sacrifices to Brahmin Kutadanta. Buddha, though speaking in a tone of sarcastic travesty, gives a good idea of the practices and rituals of the Vedic sacrifices when he said:

> "And further, O Brahmin, at that sacrifice neither were any oxen slain, neither goats, nor fowls, nor fatted pigs, nor were any kind of living creatures put to death. No trees were cut down to be used as posts, no Darbha grasses mown to stress around the sacrificial spot. And the slaves and messengers and workmen there employed were driven neither by rods nor fear, nor carried on their work weeping with tears upon their faces."

Kutadanta on the other hand in thanking Buddha for his conversion gives an idea of the magnitude of the slaughter of animals which took place at such sacrifices when he says:

> "I, even I betake myself to the venerable Gotama as my guide, to the Doctrine and the Order. May the venerable One accept me as a disciple, as one who, from this day forth, as long as life endures, has taken him as his guide. And I myself, O, Gotama, will have the seven hundred bulls, and the seven hundred steers, and the seven hundred heifers, and the seven hundred goats, and the seven hundred rams set free. To them I grant their life. Let them eat grass and drink fresh water and may cool breezes waft around them."

In the Samyuta Nikaya (III, 1-9) we have another description of a Yajna performed by Pasenadi, king of Kosala. It is said that five hundred bulls, five hundred calves and many heifers, goats and rams were led to the pillar to be sacrificed.

With this evidence no one can doubt that there was a time when Hindus—both Brahmins and non-Brahmins—ate not only flesh but also beef.

II

The food habits of the different classes of Hindus have been as fixed and stratified as their cults, just as Hindus can be classified on the basis of their habits of food. On the basis of their cults, Hindus are either *Saivites* (followers of Siva) or *Vaishnavites* (followers of Vishnu). Similarly, Hindus are either *Mansahari* (those who eat flesh) or *Shakahari* (those who are vegetarians).

For ordinary purposes the division of Hindus into two classes *Mansahari* and *Shakahari* may be enough. But is must be admitted that it is not exhaustive and does not take account of all the classes which exist in Hindu society. For an exhaustive classification, the class of Hindus called *Mansahari* shall have to be further divided into two sub-classes: (i) Those who eat flesh but do not eat cow's flesh; and (ii) Those who eat flesh including cow's flesh; In other words, on the basis of food

taboos, Hindu society falls into three classes: (i) Those who are vegetarians; (ii) Those who eat flesh but do not eat cow's flesh, and (iii) Those who eat flesh including cow's flesh. Corresponding to this classification, we have in Hindu society three classes: (1) Brahmins; (2) Non-Brahmins; and (3) The Untouchables. This division though not in accord with the fourfold division of society called Chaturvarnya, yet it is in accord with facts as they exist. For, in the Brahmins[3] we have a class which is vegetarian, in the non-Brahmins the class which eats flesh but does not eat cow's flesh and in the Untouchables a class which eats flesh including cow's flesh.

This threefold division is therefore substantial and is in accord with facts. Anyone who stops to turn over this classification in his mind is bound to be struck by the position of the Non-Brahmins. One can quite understand vegetarianism. One can quite understand meat-eating. But it is difficult to understand why a person who is a flesh-eater should object to one kind of flesh namely cow's flesh. This is an anomaly which call for explanation. Why did the Non-Brahmin give up beef-eating? For this purpose it is necessary to examine laws on the subject. The relevant legislation must be found either in the Law of Asoka or the Law of Manu.

To begin with Asoka. The edicts of Asoka which have reference to this matter are Rock Edict No.I and Pillar Edict Nos. II and V. Rock Edict No. I reads as follows:

> "This pious Edict has been written by command of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King. Here (in the capital) no animal may be slaughtered for sacrifice, nor may the holiday feast be held, because His Sacred and Gracious Majesty, the king sees much offence in the holiday feasts, although in certain places holiday feasts are excellent in the sight of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the king.
>
> "Formerly, in the kitchen of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King, each day many hundred thousands of living creatures were slaughtered to make curries. But now, when this pious edict is being written, only three living creatures are slaughtered (daily) for curry, to wit, two peacocks and one antelope: the antelope, however, not invariably. Even those three living creatures henceforth shall not be slaughtered."

Pillar Edict No.II was in the following terms:

"Thus saith His Sacred and Gracious Majesty, the King:-

"The Law of Piety is excellent. But wherein consists the Law of Piety? In these things, to wit, little piety, many good deeds, compassion, liberality, truthfulness and purity.

The gift of spiritual insight I have given in manifold ways: whist on two-footed and four-footed beings, on birds and the denizens of the waters, I have conferred various favours—even unto the boon of life; and many other good deeds have I done.

For this purpose, have I caused this pious edict to be written, that men may walk after its teaching, and that it may long endure; and he who will follow its teaching will do well."

Pillar Edict V says:

"Thus said His Sacred and Gracious Majesty, the king:

When I had been consecrated twenty-six years the following species were declared *exempt from slaughter*, namely:

Parrots, starlings adjutants, Brahmany ducks, geese, *pandimukhas*, *gelatas*, bats,-queen-ants, female tortoises, boneless fish, *vedaveyakas*, *gangapuputakas*, skate, (river) tortoise, porcupines, tree-squirrels, *barasingha* stag. Brahmany bulls, monkeys, rhinoceros, grey doves village pigeons, and all *fourfooted animals which are not utilised or eaten*.

She-goats, ewes, cows, that is to say, those either with young or in milk, are exempt from slaughter as well as their off-spring up to six months of age.

The caponing of cocks must not be done.

Chaff must not be burned along with the living things in it.

Forests must not be burned either for mischief or so as to destroy living creatures.

The living must not be fed with the living. At each of the three seasonal full moons, and at the full moon of the month Tishya (December-January) for three days in each case, namely, the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the first fortnight, and the first day of the second fortnight, as well as on the first days throughout the year, fish is exempt from killing and may not be sold.

"On the same days, in elephant-preserves or fish-ponds no other classes of animals may be destroyed.

On the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth days of each fortnight, as well as on the Tishya and Punarvasa days and festival days, the castration of bulls must not be performed, nor may he-goats, rams, boars and other animals liable to castration be castrated.

On the Tishya and Punarvasa days, on the seasonal full moon days, and during the fortnights of the seasonal full moons the branding of horses and oxen must not be done.

During the time upto the twenty-sixth anniversary of my consecration twenty-five jail deliveries have been effected."

So much for the legislation of Asoka.

Let us turn to Manu. His Laws contain the following provisions regarding meat-eating:

"V.11. Let him avoid all carnivorous birds and those living in villages, and one hoofed animals which are not specially permitted (to be eaten), and the Tithbha (Parra) Jacana.

V.12. The sparrow, the Plava, the Hamsa, the Brahmani duck, the village-cock, the Sarasa crane, the Raggudal, the woodpecker, the parrot, and the starling.

V.13. Those which feed striking with their beaks, web-footed birds, the Koyashti, those which scratch with their toes, those which dive and live on fish, meat from a slaghter-house and dried meat.

V.14. The Baka and the Balaka crane, the raven, the Khangartaka (animals) that eat fish, village-pigs, and all kinds of fishes.

V.15. He who eats the flesh of any (animals) is called the eater of the flesh of that (particular) creature, he who eats fish is an eater of every (kind of) flesh, let him therefore avoid fish.

V.16. (But the fish called) Pathine and (that called) Rohita may be eaten, if used for offering to the gods or to the manes: (one may eat) likewise Ragivas, Simhatundas, and Sasalkas on all occasions.

V.17. Let him not eat solitary or unknown beasts and birds though they may fall under (the categories of) eatable creatures, not any five-toed (animals).

V.18. The porcupine, the hedgehog, the iguana, the rhinoceros, the tortoise, and the hare they declare to be eatable; likewise those (domestic animals) that have teeth in one jaw excepting camels."

Here is survey of the legislation both by Asoka and by Manu on the slaughter of animals. We are of course principally concerned with the cow. Examining the legislation of Asoka the question is: Did he prohibit the killing of the cow? On this issue there seems to be a difference of opinion. Prof. Vincent Smith is of opinion that Asoka did not prohibit the killing of the cow. Commenting on the legislation of Asoka on the subject, Prof. Smith says:[4]

> "It is noteworthy that Asoka's rules do not forbid the slaughter of cow, which, apparently, continued to be lawful."

Prof. Radhakumud Mookerji joins issue with Prof. Smith and says[5] that Asoka did prohibit the slaughter of the cow. Prof. Mookerji relies upon the reference in Pillar Edict V to the rule of exemption which was made applicable to all four-footed animals and argues that under this rule cow was exempted from killing. This is not a correct reading of the statement in the Edict. The Statement in the Edict is a qualified statement. It does not refer to all four-footed animals but only to four-footed animals, *which are not utilised or eaten*. A cow cannot be said to be a four-footed animal which was not utilized or eaten. Prof. Vincent Smith seems to be correct in saying that Asoka did not prohibit the slaughter of the cow. Prof. Mookerji tries to get out of the difficulty by saying that at the time of

Asoka the cow was not eaten and therefore came within the prohibition. His statement is simply absurd for the cow was an animal which was very much eaten by all classes.

It is quite unnecessary to resort as does Prof. Mookerji to a forced construction of the Edict and to make Asoka prohibit the slaughter of the cow as though it was his duty to do so. Asoka had no particular interest in the cow and owed no special duty to protect her against killing. Asoka was interested in the sanctity of all life human as well as animal. He felt his duty to prohibit the taking of life where taking of life was not necessary. That is why he prohibited slaughtering animal for sacrifice[6] which he regarded as unnecessary and of animals which are not utilized nor eaten which again would be wanton and unnecessary. That he did not prohibit the slaughter of the cow in specie may well be taken as a fact which for having regard to the Buddhist attitude in the matter cannot be used against Asoka as a ground for casting blame.

Coming to Manu there is no doubt that he too did not prohibit the slaughter of the cow. On the other hand he made the eating of cow's flesh on certain occasions obligatory.

Why then did the non-Brahmins give up eating beef? There appears to be no apparent reason for this departure on their part. But there must be some reason behind it. The reason I like to suggest is that it was due to their desire to imitate the Brahmins that the non-Brahmins gave up beef-eating. This may be a novel theory but it is not an impossible theory. As the French author, Gabriel Tarde has explained that culture within a society spreads by imitation of the ways and manners of the superior classes by the inferior classes. This imitation is so regular in its flow that its working is as mechanical as the working of a natural law. Gabriel Tarde speaks of the laws of imitation. One of these laws is that the lower classes always imitate the higher classes. This is a matter of such common knowledge that hardly any individual can be found to question its validity.

That the spread of the cow-worship among and cessation of beef-eating by the non-Brahmins has taken place by reason of the habit of non-Brahmins to imitate the Brahmins who were

undoubtedly their superiors is beyond dispute. Of course there was an extensive propaganda in favour of cow-worship by the Brahmins. The Gayatri Purana is a piece of this propaganda. But initially it is the result of the natural law of imitation. This, of course, raises another question: Why did the Brahmins give up beef-eating?

III*

The non-Brahmins have evidently undergone a revolution. From being beef-eaters to have become non-beef-eaters was indeed a revolution. But if the non-Brahmins underwent one revolution, the Brahmins had undergone two. They gave up beef-eating which was one revolution. To have given up meat-eating altogether and become vegetarians was another revolution.

That this was a revolution is beyond question. For as has been shown in the previous chapters there was time when the Brahmins were the greatest beef-eaters. Although the non-Brahmins did eat beef they could not have had it every day. The cow was a costly animal and the non-Brahmins could ill afford to slaughter it just for food. He only did it on special occasion when his religious duty or personal interest to propitiate a deity compelled him to do. But the case with the Brahmin was different. He was priest. In a period overridden by ritualism there was hardly a day on which there was no cow sacrifice to which the Brahmin was not invited by some non-Brahmin. For the Brahmin every day was a beef-steak day. The Brahmins were therefore the greatest beef-eaters. The Yajna of the Brahmins was nothing but the killing of innocent animals carried on in the name of religion with pomp and ceremony with an attempt to enshroud it in mystery with a view to conceal their appetite for beef. Some idea of this mystery pomp and ceremony can be had from the directions contained in the Atreya Brahmana touching the killing of animals in a Yajna.

The actual killing of the animal is preceded by certain

* The Untouchables, 1948, pp. 100-121 ; Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 7, pp. 334-349.

initiatory Rites accompanied by incantations too long and too many to be detailed here....

What is said by the Atreya Brahmana places two things beyond dispute. One is that the Brahmins monopolised the whole of the flesh of the sacrificial animal. Except for a paltry bit they did not even allow the sacrificer to share in it. The second is that the Brahmins themselves played the part of butchers in the slaughter of the animal. As a matter of principle the Brahmins should not eat the flesh of the animal killed at a sacrifice. The principle underlying Yajna is that man should offer himself as sacrifice to the gods. He offers an animal only to release himself from this obligation. From this it followed that the animal, being only a substitute for the man, eating the flesh of animal meant eating human flesh. This theory was very detrimental to the interest of the Brahmins who had a complete monopoly of the flesh of the animal offered for sacrifice. The Atreya Brahmana which had seen in this theory the danger of the Brahmins being deprived of the flesh of sacrificial animal takes pains to explain away the theory by a simple negation. It says[7]:

> "The man who is initiated (into the sacrificial mysteries) offers himself to all deities. Agni represents all deities and Soma represents all deities. When he (the sacrificer) offers the animal to Agni-Soma he releases himself (by being represented by the animal) from being offered to all deities.
>
> They say: "do not eat from the animal offered to Agni-Soma. Who eats from this animal, eats from human flesh; because the sacrificer releases himself (from being sacrificed) by means of the animal". But this (precept) is not to be attended to."

Given these facts, no further evidence seems to be necessary to support the statement that the Brahmins were not merely beef-eaters but they were also butchers.

Why then did the Brahmins change front? Let us deal with their change of front in two stages. First, why did they give up beef-eating?

As has already been shown cow-killing was not legally prohibited by Asoka. Even if it had been prohibited, a law

made by the Buddhist Emperor could never have been accepted by the Brahmins as binding upon them.

Did Manu prohibit beef-eating? If he did, then that would be binding on the Brahmins and would afford an adequate explanation of their change of front. Looking into the Manu Smriti one does find the following verses:

"V. 46. He who does not seek to cause the sufferings of bonds and death to living creatures, (but) desires the good of all (beings), obtains endless bliss.

"V. 47. He who does not injure any (creature), attains without an effort what he thinks of what he undertakes, and what he fixes his mind on.

"V. 48. Meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures, and injury to sentient beings is detrimental to (the attainment of) heavenly bliss; let him therefore shun (the use of) meat.

"V. 49. Having well considered the (disgusting) origin of flesh and the (cruelty of) fettering and slaying corporeal beings, let him entirely abstain from eating flesh."

If these verses can be treated as containing positive injunctions they would be sufficient to explain why the Brahmins gave up meat-eating and became vegetarians. But it is impossible to treat these verses as positive injunctions, carrying the force of law. They are either exhortations or interpolations introduced after the Brahmins had become vegetarians in praise of the change. That the latter is the correct view is proved by the following verses which occur in the same chapter of the Manu Smriti:

"V. 28. The Lord of creatures (Prajapati) created this whole (world to be) the sustenance of the vital spirit; both the immovable and the movable creation is the food of the vital spirit.

"V. 29. What is destitute of motion is the food of those endowed with locomotion; (animals) without fangs (are the food) of those with fangs, those without hands of those who possess hands, and the timid of the bold.

"V. 30. The eater who daily even devours those destined to be his food, commits no sin; for the creator himself created both the eaters and those who are to be eaten (for those special purposes).

"V. 56. There is no sin in eating meat, in (drinking) spirituous liquor, and in carnal intercourse for that is the natural way of created beings, but abstention brings great rewards.

"V. 27. One may eat meat when it has been sprinkled with water, while Mantras were recited, when Brahmanas desire (one's doing it) when one is engaged (in the performance of a rite) according to the law, and when one's life is in danger.

"V. 31. 'The consumption of meat (is befitting) for sacrifices,' that is declared to be a rule made by the gods, but to persist (in using it) on other (occasions) is said to be a proceeding worthy of Rakshasas.

"V. 32. He who eats meat, when he honours the gods and manes commits no sin, whether he has bought it, or himself has killed (the animal) or has received it as a present from others.

"V. 42. A twice-born man who, knowing the true meaning of the Veda, slays an animal for these purposes, causes both himself and the animal to enter a most blessed state.

"V. 39. Swayambhu (the self-existent) himself created animals for the sake of sacrifices; sacrifices (have been instituted) for the good of this whole (world); hence the slaughtering (of beasts) for sacrifice is not slaughtering (in the ordinary) sense of the word).

"V. 40. Herbs, trees, cattle, birds, and other animals that have been destroyed for sacrifices, receive (being reborn) higher existences."

Manu goes further and makes eating of flesh compulsory. Note the following verse:-

"V. 35. But a man who, being duly engaged (to officiate or

to dine at a sacred rite), refuses to eat meat, becomes after death an animal during twentyone existences."

That Manu did not prohibit meat-eating is evident enough. That Manu Smriti did not prohibit cow-killing can also be proved from the Smriti itself. In the first place, the only references to cow in the Manu Smriti are to be found in the catalogue of rules which are made applicalbe by Manu to the Snataka. They are set out below :-

1. A Snataka should not eat food which a cow has smelt.[8]
2. A Snataka should not step over a rope to which a calf is tied.[9]
3. A Snataka should not urinate in a cowpan.[10]
4. A Snataka should not answer call of nature facing a cow.[11]
5. A Snataka should not keep his right arm uncovered when he enters a cowpan.[12]
6. A Snataka should not interrupt a cow which is sucking her calf, nor tell anybody of it.[13]
7. A Snataka should not ride on the back of the cow.[14]
8. A Snataka should not offend the cow.[15]
9. A Snataka who is impure must not touch a cow with his hand.[16]

From these references it will be seen that Manu did not regard the cow as a sacred animal. On the other hand, he regarded it as an impure animal whose touch caused ceremonial pollution.

There are verses in Manu which show that he did not prohibit the eating of beef. In this connection, reference may be made to Chapter III. 3. It says:-

"He (Snataka) who is famous (for the strict performance of) his duties and has received his heritage, the Veda from his father, shall be honoured, sitting on couch and adorned with a garland with the present of a cow (the honey mixture)."

The question is why should Manu recommend the gift of a cow to a Snataka? Obviously, to enable him to perform Madhuparka. If that is so, it follows that Manu knew that Brahmins did eat beef and he had no objection to it.

Another reference would be to Manu's discussion of the animals whose meat is eatable and those whose meat is not. In Chapter V. 18. he says:-

"The porcupine, the hedgehog, the iguana, the rhinoceros, the tortoise, and the hare they declare to be eatable. Ilkewise those (domestic animals) that have teeth in one jaw only, excepting camels".

In this verse Manu gives general permission to eat the flesh of all domestic animals that have teeth in one jaw only. To this rule Manu makes one exception, namely, the camel. In this class of domestic animals—those that have teeth in one jaw only—falls not only the camel but also the cow. It is noteworthy that Manu does not make an exception in the case of the cow. This means that Manu had no objection to the eating of the cow's flesh.

Manu did not make the killing of the cow an offence. Manu divides sins into two classes (i) mortal sins and (ii) minor sins. Among the mortal sins Manu includes:

"XI.55. Killing a Brahmana, drinking (the spirituous liquor called Sura) stealing the (gold of Brahmana) adultery with a Guru's wife, and associating with such offenders".

Among minor sins Manu includes:

"XI. 60.Killing the cow, sacrificing for those unworthy to sacrifice, adultery, setting oneself, casting off one's teacher, mother, father or son, giving up the (daily) study of the Veda and neglecting the (sacred domestic) fire."

From this it will be clear that according to Manu cow-killing was only a minor sin. It was reprehensible only if the cow was killed without good and sufficient reason. Even if it was otherwise, it was not heinous or inexplicable. The same was the attitude of Yajnavalkya.[17]

All this proves that for generations the Brahmins had been eating beef. Why did they give up beef-eating? Why did they, as an extreme step, give up meat eating altogether and become vegetarians? It is two revolutions rolled into one. As has been shown it has not been done as a result of the preaching of the Manu, their Divine Law-maker. The revolution has taken place in spite of Manu and contrary to his directions. What made the Brahmins take this step? Was philosophy responsible for it? Or was it dictated by strategy?

Two explanations are offered. One explanation is that this deification of the cow was manifestation of the Advaita philosophy that one supreme entity pervaded the whole universe, that on that account all life human as well as animal was sacred. This explanation is obviously unsatisfactory. In the first place, it does not fit in with facts. The Vedanta Sutra which proclaims the doctrine of oneness of life does not prohibit the killing of animals for sacrificial purposes as is evident from II. 1.28. In the second place, if the transformation was due to the desire to realize the ideal of Advaita then there is no reason why it should have stopped with the cow. It should have extended to all other animals.

Another explanation[18] more ingenious than the first, is that this transformation in the life of the Brahmin was due to the rise of the doctrine of the Transmigration of the soul. Even this explanation does not fit in with facts. The Brahadaranyaka Upanishad upholds the doctrine of transmigration (vi.2) and yet recommends that if a man desires to have a learned son born to him he should prepare a mass of the flesh of the bull or ox or of other flesh with rice and ghee. Again, how is it that this doctrine which is propounded in the Upanishads did not have any effect on the Brahmins upto the time of the Manu Smriti, a period of at least 400 years. Obviously, this explanation is no explanation. Thirdly, if Brahmins became vegetarians by reason of the doctrine of transmigration of the soul how is it, it did not make the non-Brahmins take to vegetarianism?

To my mind, it was strategy which made the Brahmins give up beef-eating and start worshipping the cow. The clue to the worship of the cow is to be found in the struggle between Buddhism and Brahmanism and the means adopted by

Brahmanism to establish its supremacy over Buddhism. The strife between Buddhism and Brahmanism is a crucial fact in Indian history. Without the realization of this fact, it is impossible to explain some of the features of Hinduism. Unfortunately students of Indian history have entirely missed the importance of this strife. They knew there was Brahmanism. But they seem to be entirely unaware of the struggle for supremacy in which these creeds were engaged and that their struggle which extended for 400 years has left some indeliable marks on religion, society and politics of India.

This is not the place for describing the full story of the struggle. All one can do is to mention a few salient points, Buddhism was at one time the religion of the majority of the people of India. It continued to be the religion of the masses for hundreds of years. It attacked Brahmanism on all sides as no religion had done before. Brahmanism was on the wane and if not on the wane, it was certainly on the defensive. As a result of the spread of Buddhism, the Brahmins had lost all power and prestige at the Royal Court and among the people. They were smarting under the defeat they had suffered at the hands of Buddhism and were making all possible efforts to regain their power and prestige. Buddhism had made so deep an impression on the minds of the masses and had taken such a hold of them that it was absolutely impossible for the Brahmins to fight the Buddhists except by accepting their ways and means and practising the Buddhist creed in its extreme form. After the death of Buddha his followers started setting up the images of the Buddha and building stupas. The Brahmins followed it. They, in their turn, built temples and installed in them images of Shiva, Vishnu and Ram and Krishna etc.—all with the object of drawing away the crowd that was attracted by the image worship of Buddha. That is how temples and images which had no place in Brahmanism came into Hinduism. The Buddhists rejected the Brahmanic religion which consisted of Yajna and animal sacrifice, particularly of the cow. The objection to the sacrifice of the cow had taken a strong hold of the minds of the masses especially as they were an agricultural population and the cow was a very useful animal. The Brahmins in all probability had come to be hated as the killer of cows in the same way as the guest had come to be hated as *Gognha*,

the killer of the cow by the householder, because whenever he came a cow had to be killed in his honour. That being the case, the Brahmins could do nothing to improve their position against the Buddhists except by giving up the Yajna as a form of worship and the sacrifice of the cow.

That the object of the Brahmins in giving up beef-eating was to snatch away from the Buddhist Bhikshus the supremacy they had acquired is evidenced by the adoption of vegetarianism by Brahmins. Why did the Brahmins become vegetarian? The answer is that without becoming vegetarian the Brahmins could not have recovered the ground they had lost to their rival, namely Buddhism. In this connection it must be remembered that there was one aspect in which Brahmanism suffered in public esteem as compared to Buddhism. That was the practice of animal sacrifice which was the essence of Brahmanism and to which Buddhism was deadly opposed. That in an agricultural population there should be respect for Buddhism and revulsion against Brahmanism which involved slaughter of animals including cows and bullocks is only natural. What could the Brahmins do to recover the lost ground? To go one better than the Buddhist Bhikshus not only to give up meat-eating but to become vegetarians—which they did. That this was the object of the Brahmins in becoming vegetarians can be proved in various ways.

If the Brahmins had acted from conviction that animal sacrifice was bad, all that was necessary for them to do was to give up killing animals for sacrifice. It was unnecessary for them to be vegetarians. That they did go in for vegetarianism makes it obvious that their motive was far-reaching. Secondly, it was unnecessary for them to become vegetarians. For the Buddhist Bhikshus were not vegetarians. This statement might surprise many people owing to the popular belief that the connection between Ahimsa and Buddhism was immediate and essential. It is generally believed that the Buddhist Bhikshus eschewed animal food. This is an error. The fact is that the Buddhist Bhikshus were permitted to eat three kinds of flesh that were deemed pure. Later on they were extended to five classes. Yuan Chwang, the Chinese traveller was aware of this and spoke of the pure kinds of flesh as *Sang-Ching*. The origin of this practice among the Bhikshus is

explained by Mr. Thomas Walters. According to the story told by him[19]—

> "In the time of Buddha there was in Vaisali a wealthy general named Siha who was a covert to Buddhism. He became a liberal supporter of the Brethren and kept them constantly supplied with good flesh-food. When it was noticed abroad that the Bhikshus were in the habit of eating such food specially provided for them, the Tirthikas made the practice a matter of angry reproach. Then the abstemious ascetic Brethren, learning this, reported the circumstances to the Master, who thereupon called the Brethren together. When they assembled, he announced to them the law that they were not to eat the flesh of any animal which they had seen put to death for them, or about which they had been told that it had been slain for them. But he permitted to the Brethren as 'pure' (that is, lawful) food the flesh of animals the slaughter of which had not been seen by the Bhikshus, not heard of by them, and not suspected by them to have been on their account. In the Pali and *Ssu-fen* Vinaya it was after a breakfast given by Siha to the Buddha and some of the Brethren, for which the carcass of a large ox was procured that the Nirgranthas reviled the Bhikshu and Buddha instituted this new rule declaring fish and flesh 'pure' in the three conditions. The animal food now permitted to the Bhikshus came to be known as the 'three pures' or 'three pure kinds of flesh', and it was tersely described as 'unseen, unheard, unsuspected', or as the Chinese translations sometimes have it 'not seen, not heard nor suspected to be on my account'. Then two more kinds of animals food were declared "lawful for the Brethren viz., the flesh of animals which had died a natural death, and that of animals which had been killed by a bird of prey or other savage creature. So there came to be five classes or descriptions of flesh which the professed Buddhist was at liberty to use as food. Then the 'unseen, unheard, unsuspected' came to be treated as one class, and this together with the 'natural death; and 'bird killed; made a *San-ching*".

As the Buddhist Bhikshus did eat meat the Brahmins had no reason to give it up. Why then did the Brahmins give up

meat-eating and become vegetarians? It was because they did not want to put themselves merely on the same footing in the eyes of the public as the Buddhist Bhikshus.

The giving up of the Yajna system and abandonment of the sacrifice of the cow could have had only a limited effect. At the most it would have put the Brahmins on the same footing as the Buddhists. The same would have been the case if they had followed the rules observed by the Buddhist Bhikshus in the matter of meat-eating. It could not have given the Brahmins the means of achieving supremacy over the Buddhists which was their ambition. They wanted to oust the Buddhists from the place of honour and respect which they had acquired in the minds of the masses by their opposition to the killing of the cow for sacrificial purposes. To achieve their purpose the Brahmins had to adopt the usual tactics of a wreckless adventurer. It is to beat extremism by extremism. It is the strategy which all rightists use to overcome the leftists. The only way to beat the Buddhists was to go a step further and be vegetarians.

There is another reason which can be relied upon to support the thesis that the Brahmins started cow-worship, gave up beef-eating and became vegetarians in order to vanquish Buddhism. It is the date when cow-killing became a mortal sin. It is well-known that cow-killing was not made an offence by Ashoka. Many people expect him to have come forward to prohibit the killing of the cow. Prof. Vincent Smith regards it as surprising. But there is nothing surprising in it.

Buddhism was against animal sacrifice in general. It had no particular affection for the cow. Asoka had therefore no particular reason to make a law to save the cow. What is more astonishing is the fact that cow-killing was made a *Mahapataka*, a mortal sin or a capital offence by the Gupta Kings who were champions of Hinduism which recognised and sanctioned the killing of the cow for sacrificial purposes. As pointed out by Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar[20]

> "We have got the incontrovertible evidence of inscriptions to show that early in the 5th century A.D. killing a cow was looked upon as an offence of the deepest turpitude, turpitude as deep as that involved in murdering a Brahman. We have thus a copper-plate inscription dated 465 A.D. and referring itself to the reign of Skandagupta of the Imperial Gupta dynasty. It registers a grant and ends with a verse saying: 'Whosoever will transgress this grant that has been assigned (shall become as guilty as) the slayer of a cow, the slayer of a spiritual preceptor (or) the slayer of a Brahman. A still earlier record placing *go-hatya* on the same footing as *brahma hatya* is that of Chandragupta II, grandfather of Skandagupta just mentioned. It bears the Gupta date 93, which is equivalent to 412 A.D. It is engraved on the railing which surrounds the celebrated Buddhist stupa at Sanchi, in Central India. This also speaks of a benefaction made by an officer of Chandragupta and ends as follows:.. "Whosoever shall interfere with this arrangement... he shall become invested with (the guilt of) the slaughter of a cow or of a Brahman, and with (the guilt of) the five *anantarya*". Here the object of this statement is to threaten the resumer of the grant, be he a Brahminist or a Buddhist, with the sins regarded as mortal by each community. The *anantaryas* are the five *mahapatakas* according to Buddhist theology. They are: matricide, patricide, killing an Arhat, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and causing a split among the priesthod. The *Mahapatakas* with which a Brahminist is here threatened are only two: viz., the killing of a cow and the murdering of a Brahman. The latter is obviously a *mahapataka* as it is mentioned as such in all the Smritis, but the former has been specified only an upapataka by Apastamba, Manu, Yajnavalkya and so forth. But the very fact that it is here associated with *brahma-hatya* and both have been put on a par with the *anantaryas* of the Buddhists shows that in the beginning of the fifth century A,.D., it was raised to the category of *mahapatakas*. Thus *go-hatya* must have come to be considered a *mahapataka* at least one century earlier, i.e., about the commencement of the fourth century A.D."

The question is why should a Hindu king have come forward to make a law against cow-killing, that is to say, against the Laws of Manu? The answer is that the Brahmins had to suspend or abrogate a requirement of their Vedic religion in order to overcome the supremacy of the Buddhist Bhikshus. If the analysis is correct then it is obvious that the worship of

the cow is the result of the struggle between Buddhism and Brahmanism. It was a means adopted by the Brahmins to regain their lost position.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Dharma Shastra Vichar (Marathi), p.180.
2. Kane's Volume II, Part I, p. 545.
3. The Brahmins of India fall into two divisions (1) Pancha Dravid and (2) Pancha Gauda. The former are vegetations, the latter are not.
4. Smith, Asoka, p. 58.
5. Mookerji, Asoka, pp. 21, 181, 184.
6. See Rock Edict No.1.
7. Atreya Brahmana (Martin Haug) II. p. 80.
8. Manu, 209.
9. Ibid.,38.
10. Ibid.,45.
11. Manu, 48.
12. Ibid., 58.
13. Ibid., 59.
14. Manu, 70.
15. Ibid., 162.
16. Ibid., 142.
17. Yaj, III 227 and III 234.
18. Kane's Dharma Shastra II. Part II. p. 776.
19. Yuan Chwang (1904) Vol. I. p. 55.
20. Some Aspects of Ancient Indian Culture. (1940) pp. 78-79.

11

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF BUDDHISM

I*

Most people who have studied the rise and fall of Buddhism in India would admit that this subject had not been adequately dealt with as it should have been. I have not been able to find any authentic material explaining why Buddhism rose to the height it achieved and why it disappeared in India.

To know a subject thoroughly, one must know its relevant traditions exactly and precisely. Similarly, the significance of Buddhism would not be understood unless the exact circumstances which gave birth to it are understood. I disagree with the view that Hinduism has all along been the religion of India. Hinduism is the latest development of social thought in India.

The religion of India has undergone three changes. Vedic religion which was practised first gave way, in course of time, to Brahmanism and this in turn to Hinduism. It was during Brahmanic period that Buddhism was born. This was because Buddhism opposed inequality, authority and division of society into various classes which Brahmanism had introduced in India.

It is easy to practise the Vedic religion. In it, performance of yagya (yajnas) is the main puja. The Vedic Aryans used to worship innumerable gods. They used to please them by performing yagyas. The puja to be performed for these gods

* Dr. Ambedkar on Buddhism, Edited: D.C. Ahir, 1982, pp. 111-114 - translated from Baudh Dharam Hi Manav Dharam (Hindi) - Speech at Colombo in Sri Lanka on 6 June 1950 - edited by Bhikshu Dharamrakshit.

should necessarily be sacred and superb. In those Agrarian times, cows were the chief wealth of the Aryans. Therefore, they used to sacrifice cows to honour their deities. In this way, Vedic Dharma encouraged violence. Brahmins succeeded in organising the society only by adopting Vedic yagyas. The Brahmins also divided the society into four sections (Varnas)—Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. The division of the society into four varnas (castes) created great inequalities. They said that the Brahmins were born of the Brahma's mouth and Shudras from his feet. Can any body believe that the basic principle of any religion could be to divide the society? Yet this is what Brahmanism has perpetuated. On the other hand, equality is the main feature of Buddhism. The religion of the Buddha gives freedom of thought and freedom of self-development to all. To abjure violence is another essential teaching of Buddhism. It has never taught to achieve salvation by sacrificing animals or any living being to propitiate gods. I would say that the rise of Buddhism in India was as significant as the French Revolution. Prior to the advent of Buddhism, it was impossible to even think that a Shudra would get throne. History of India reveals that after the emergence of Buddhism, Shudras are seen getting thrones. Verily Buddhism paved way for establishment of democracy and socialistic pattern of society in India.

It is a perplexing problem how Buddhism, which had acquired a highest place, disappeared from India. There is very little material to tell us about the condition of Buddhism upto 274 B.C. It is however seen that Buddhism was at its climax of popularity in the reign of Asoka. How such a great and popular religion lost ground in India is a painful phenomena.

Buddhism appears to have met strong opposition in 184 B.C. when the last Mauryan King was assassinated by his Chief Commander. This was one of the awful actions of the Brahmins to save their religion. But it is a pity that the historians have not given sufficient importance to this incident. While going through the Buddhist literature, I find that 90 per cent followers of the Buddha were Brahmins. Brahmins used to come to the Buddha for discussion and argumentation, and when defeated, used to become faithful to the Buddha and

ultimately accepted Buddhism. The Buddhist literature is full of such incidents. Therefore, how is it that Buddhism that had flourished amongst the majority of Brahmins was later on destroyed by the Brahmins themselves.

In my opinion, the main reason for this was the family deity's (kula deva) worship. In India, like the village deity and national deity, there were family deities also who were worshipped through the Brahmins. The priests who used to go for worshipping these deities started influencing the affairs of the State through the queens. Asoka after embracing Buddhism discontinued this practice and removed the idols of such deities. Asoka said, "As I venerate the Buddha, the Enlightened One, there is no need to worship any other deity." This action of Asoka disturbed the Brahmins very much as it ended their unfair means of livelihood and exploitation. They pledged to take revenge for this loss.

The Brahmins were of the view that after death, kings go to hell because of their errors and omissions. Therefore, they did not agree to be rulers but preferred to be the Chief Advisers to the Kings. In order to take revenge for the loss they suffered on account of stoppage of Kulapuja (family deity's worships) Brahmins gave up the approved motto of being advisers only and tried to grab power. With the help of their well-wisher Kshatriyas, they also organised an united Brahmin-Kshatriya axis against Buddhism. The ascendency of Brahmanism again in Indian society is one of the reasons for the downfall of Buddhism.

The foreign invasions are also responsible for the decline of Buddhism in India. The Greeks did no harm to Buddhism. There are positive proofs available that the Greeks gave liberal financial assistance for Buddhist activities. The Huns invaded India, and after being defeated by the Guptas, they settled in India. Prior to this, the Huns tried to destroy Buddhism. The religion of the Buddha got the severest blow from the Muslim invasion. They destroyed the Buddhist idols and killed the Bhikhus. They mistook the great Nalanda University as the Fort of Buddhists and killed a large number of monks thinking that they were soldiers. The few Bhikkus who escaped the onslaught fled away to the neighbouring countries like Nepal, Tibet and China.

Some of my Hindu friends often ask why Hinduism, which has also idol-worship, survived in India and Buddhism died. My answer is that whatsoever the religion may be, it requires the priest community to preserve it. Due to the shortage of Buddhist monks, Buddhism declined. Efforts were subsequently made by some Buddhists to raise another priesthoods in order to revive Buddhism but their efforts failed. Such is no case with Hinduism. A Brahmin's son is priest by birth. Therefore, no separate priest community is required to protect their religion. This is why Hinduism survived Muslim onslaught. Moreover, Buddhism as a religion is difficult to practise while Hinduism is not. Besides, the political climate in India had also been inhospitable to its advancement.

I do not agree with the suggestion made by many people in India that Buddhism was destroyed by the dialectics of Shankaracharya. This is contrary to the facts as Buddhism existed for many centuries after his death. In my opinion, Shankaracharya himself was a Buddhist. His Guru too was a Buddhist. Of course, Buddhism declined in India because of the rise of Vaishnavism and Saivism, the two cults which adopted and absorbed many good points of Buddhism. Today, Hinduism is in a very much changed form. Hinduism which taught and practised violence earlier has started teaching non-violence. This has been copied from Buddhism. Buddhism may have disappeared in material form but as a spiritual force it still exists in India."

II*

The disappearance of Buddhism from India has been a matter of great surprise to everybody who cares to think about the subject and is also a matter of regret. But it lives in China, Japan, Burma, Siam, Annam, Indo-China, Ceylon and parts of Malaya-Archipalego. In India alone, it has ceased to exist. Not only it has ceased to live in India but even the name of Buddha has gone out of memory of most Hindus. How could such a thing have happened? This is an important question for which there has been no satisfactory answer. Not only there is no satisfactory answer, nobody has made an attempt to arrive at a satisfactory answer. In dealing with this subject people

* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, pp. 229-238.

fail to make a very important distinction. It is a distinction between the fall of Buddhism and the decline of Buddhism. It is necessary to make this distinction because the fall of Buddhism is one, the reasons for which are very different from those which brought about its downfall. For the fall is due to quite obvious causes while the reason for its decline are not quite so obvious.

There can be no doubt that the fall of Buddhism in India was due to the invasions of the Musalmans. Islam came out as the enemy of the *But*. The word *But* as everybody knows is an Arabic word and means an idol. Not many people however know what the derivation of the word *But* is. *But* is the Arabic corruption of Buddha. Thus the origin of the word indicates that in the Moslem mind idol worship had come to be identified with the Religion of the Buddha. To the Muslims, they were one and the same thing. The mission to break the idols thus became the mission to destroy Buddhism. Islam destroyed Buddhism not only in India but wherever it went. Before Islam came into being Buddhism was the religion of Bactria, Parthia, Afghanistan, Gandhara and Chinese Turkestan, as it was of the whole Asia.[1] In all these countries Islam destroyed Buddhism. As Vincent Smith[2] points out:

> "The furious massacres perpetrated in many places by Musalman invaders were more efficacious than Orthodox Hindu persecutions, and had a great deal to do with the disappearance of Buddhism in several provinces (of India)".

Not all will be satisfied with this explanation. It does seem inadequate. Islam attacked both, Brahmanism and Buddhism. It will be asked why should one survive and the other perish. The argument is plausible but not destructive of the validity of the thesis. To admit that Brahmanism survived, it does not mean that the fall of Buddhism was not due to the sword of Islam. All that it means is that, there were circumstances which made it possible for Brahmanism and impossible for Buddhism to survive the onslaught of Islam. Fortunately for Brahmanism and unfortunately for Buddhism that was the fact.

Those who will pursue the matter will find that there were three special circumstances which made it possible for

Brahmanism and impossible for Buddhism to survive the calamity of Muslim invasions. In the first place Brahmanism at the time of the Muslim invasions had the support of the State. Buddhism had no such support. What is however more important is the fact that this State support to Brahmanism lasted till Islam had become a quiet religion and the flames of the original fury as a mission against idolatory had died out. Secondly the Buddhists priesthood perished by the sword of Islam and could not be resusciated. On the other hand it was not possible for Islam to annihilate the Brahmanic priesthood. In the third place the Buddhist laity was persecuted by the Brahmanic rulers of India and to escape this tyranny the mass of the Buddhist population of India embraced Islam and renounced Buddhism.

Of these circumstances there is not one which is not supported by history.

Among the Provinces of India which came under Muslim domination. Sind was the first. It was ruled by a Shudra King. But the throne was usurped by a Brahmin who established his own dynasty which naturally supported the Brahmanic religion at the time of the invasion of Sind by Ibne Kassim in 712 A.D. The ruler of Sind was Dahir. This Dahir belonged to the dynasty of Brahmin rulers.

Heuen Tsang had noticed that the Punjab was in his time ruled by a Kshatriya Buddhist dynasty. This dynasty ruled Punjab till about 880 A.D. In that year the throne was usurped by a Brahmin army commander by name Lalliya who founded the Brahmin Shahi dynasty. This dynasty ruled the Punjab from 880 A.D. to 1024 A.D. It will thus be seen that at the time when the invasions of the Punjab were commenced by Sabuktagin and Mohammad, the native rulers belonged to the Brahmanic religion and Jayapala (960-980 A.D.) Anandpal (980-1000 A.D.) and Trilochanpal (1000-21 A.D.) of whose struggles with Sabuktagin and Mohammad we read so much were rulers belonging to the Brahmanic faith.

Central India began to be infested by Muslim invasions which commenced from the time of Mohammad and continued under the leadership of Shahabuddin Ghori. At that time Central India consisted of different kingdoms. Mewad (now

known as Udepur) ruled by the Gulohits. Sambhar (now divided into Bundi, Kota and Sirohi) ruled by the Chauhans, Kanauj[3] ruled by the Pratihars, Dhar ruled by the Parmars, Bundelkhand ruled by Chanderllas, Anhilwad ruled by the Chavdas. Chedi ruled by the Kalachuris. Now the rulers of all these kingdoms were Rajputs and the Rajputs for reasons which are mysterious and which I will discuss later on had become the staunchest supporters of the Brahmanic religion.

About the time of these invasions Bengal had fallen into two kingdoms. Eastern and Western. West Bengal was ruled by the Kings of the Pal dynasty and East Bengal was ruled by the Kings of the Sena dynasty.

The Palas were Kshatriyas. They were Buddhists but as Mr. Vadiya says[4] "probably only in the beginning or in name". As to the Sena kings there is a difference of opinion. Dr. Bhandarkar says they were Brahmins who had taken to the military profession of the Kshatriyas. Mr. Vaidya insists that the Sena Kings were Aryan Kshatriyas or Rajputs belonging to the Lunar race. In any case there is no doubt that the Senas like the Rajputs were supporters of the orthodox faith.[5]

"South of the river Nerbudda, then existed about the time of the Muslim invasions four kingdoms (1) The Deccan Kingdom of Western Chalukyas, (2) The Southern Kingdom of the Cholas (3) The Silahara Kingdom in Konkan on the West Coast and (4) The Ganga Kingdom of Trikalinga on the East Coast. These Kingdoms flourished during 1000-1200 A.D. which is the period of the Muslim invasions. There were under them, certain feudatory Kingdoms which rose to power in the 12th Century A.D. and which became independent and powerful in the 13th Century. They are (1) Devagiri ruled by the Yadavas, (2) Warangal ruled by Kakatiyas (3) Halebid ruled by Hoyasalas (4) Madura ruled by the Pandyas and (5) Travancore ruled by the Cheras.

All these ruling dynasties were followers of orthodox Brahmanism.

The Muslim invasions of India commenced in the year 1001 A.D. The last wave of these invasions reached Southern India in 1296 A.D. when Allauddin Khilji subjugated the

Kingdom of Devagiri. The Muslim conquest of India was really not completed by 1296. The wars of subjugation went on between the Muslim conquerors and the local rulers who though defeated were not reduced. But the point which requires to bear in mind is that during this period of 300 years of Muslim Wars of conquests, India was governed all over by princes who professed the orthodox faith of Brahmanism. Brahmanism beaten and battered by the Muslim invaders could look to the rulers for support and sustenance and did get it. Buddhism beaten and battered by the Muslim invaders had no such hope. It was an uncared for orphan and it withered in the cold blast of the native rulers and was consumed in the fire lit up by the conquerors.

The Musalman invaders sacked the Buddhist Universities of Nalanda, Vikramasila, Jagaddala, Odantapuri to name only a few., They raised to the ground Buddhist monasteries with which the country was studded. The Monks fled away in thousands to Napal, Tibet and other places outside India. A very large number were killed outright by the Muslim commanders. How the Buddhist priesthood perished by the sword of the Muslim invaders has been recorded by the Muslim historians themselves. Summarizing the evidence relating to the slaughter of the Buddhist Monks perpetrated by the Musalman General in the course of his invasion of Bihar in 1197 A,.D. Mr. Vincent Smith says:[6]

"The Musalman General, who had already made his name a terror by repeated plundering expeditions in Bihar, seized the capital by a daring stroke. The almost contemporary historian met one of the survivors of the attacking party in A.D. 1243, and learned from him that the Fort of Bihar was seized by a party of only two hundred horsemen, who boldly rushed the postern gate and gained possession of the place. Great quantities of plunder were obtained and the slaughter of the 'shaven headed Brahmans', that is to say the Buddhist monks, was so thoroughly completed, that when the victor sought for some one capable of explaining the contents of the books in the libraries of the monasteries, not a living man could be found who was able to read them. 'It was discovered', we are told, 'that the whole of that fortress and city was a college, and in the Hindi tongue they call a college Bihar"

Such was the slaughter of the Buddhist priesthood perpetrated by the Islamic invaders. The axe was struck at the very root. For by killing the Buddhist priesthood Islam killed Buddhism. This was the greatest disaster that befell the religion of Buddha in India. Religion like any other ideology can be sustained only by propaganda. If propaganda fails, religion must disappear. The priestly class, however detestable it may be, is necessary to the sustenance of religion. For it is by its propaganda that religion is kept up. Without the priestly class religion must disappear. The sword of Islam fell heavily upon the priestly class. It perished or it fled outside India. Nobody remained to keep the flame of Buddhism burning.

It may be said that the same thing must have happened to the Brahmanic priesthood. It is possible, though not to the same extent. But there is this difference between the constitution of the two religions and the difference is so great that it contains the whole reason why Brahmanism survived the attack of Islam and why Buddhism did not. This difference relates to the constitution of the clergy.

The Brahmanic priesthood has a most elaborate organization. A clear and succinct account of it has been given by the late Sir Ramkrishan Bhandarkar in the pages of the India Antiquary.[7]

> 'Every Brahmanic family he writes, 'is devoted to the study of a particular Veda, and a particular Sakha (recension) of a Veda; and the domestic rites of the family are performed according to the ritual described in the Sutra connected with that Veda. The study consists in getting by heart the books forming the particular Veda. In Northern India, where the predominant Veda is the White Yagush and the Sakha that of the Madhyandinas, this study has almost died out, except at Banaras, where Brahmanic families from all parts of India are settled. It prevails to some extent in Gujarat, but to a much greater extent in the Maratha country; and in Tailangana there is a large number of Brahmans who still devote their life to this study. Numbers of these go about to all parts of the country in search of dakshina (fee, alms), and all well-to-do natives patronize them according to their means, by getting

them to repeat portions of their Veda, which is mostly the Black Yagush, with Apastamba for their Sutra. Hardly a week passes here in Bombay in which no Tailangana Brahman comes to me to ask for dakshina. On each occasion I get the men to repeat what they have learned, and compare it with the printed texts in my possession.

'With reference to their occupation, Brahmans of each Veda are generally divided into two classes, Grihasthas and Bhikshukas. The former devote themselves to a worldly avocation, while the latter spend their time in the study of their sacred books and the practice of their religious rites.

'Both these classes have to repeat daily the Sandhya-vandana or twilight-prayers, the forms of which are somewhat different for the different Vedas. But the repetition of the Gayatri-mantra 'Tat Savitur Vareynam' etc. five, then twenty eight or a hundred and eight times, which forms the principal portion of the ceremony, is common to all.

'Besides this, a great many perform daily what is called Brahmayagna, which on certain occasions is incumbent on all. This for the Rig-Veda consists of the first hymn of the first mandal, and the opening sentences of the Aitareya Brahmana, the five parts of the Aitareya Aranayak, the Yagus-samhita, the Sama-samhita, the Atharva-samhita. Asvalayana Kalpa Sutra, Nirukta, Khandas, Nighantu, Jyotisha, Siksha, Panini, Yagnavalkya Smriti, Mahabharata, and the Sutras of Kanada, Jaimini, and Badarayan.

The point tc be remembered is that in the matter of officiation there is no distinction between a Bhikshuka[8] and a Grahastha. In Brahmanism both are priests and the Grahastha is no less entitled to officiate as a priest than a Bhikshu is. If a Grahastha does not choose to officiate as a priest, it is because he has not mastered the mantras and the ceremonies or because he follows some more lucrative vocation. Under Brahmanic dispensation every Brahmin who is not an outcast has the capacity to be a priest. The Bhikshuka is an actual priest a Grahastha is a potential priest. All Brahmins can be recruited to form the army of Brahmanic priesthood. Further no

particular training of initiation ceremony is necessary for a Brahmin to act as a priest . His will to officiate is enough to make him function as a priest. In Brahmanism the priesthood can never become extinct. Every Brahmin is a potential priest of Brahmanism and be drafted in service when the need be. There is nothing to stop the rake's life and progress. This is not possible in Buddhism. A person must be ordained in accordance with established rites by priests already ordained, before he can act as a priest. After the massacre of the Buddhist priests, ordination became impossible so that the priesthood almost ceased to exist. Some attempt was made to fill the depleted ranks of the Buddhist priests. New recruits for the priesthood had to be drawn from all available sources. They certainly were not the best. According to Haraprasad Shastri,[9]

> "The paucity of Bhiksus brought about a great change in the composition of the Buddhist priesthood. It was the married clergy with families, who were called Aryas, that took the place of the Bhiksus proper, and began to cater to the religious needs of the Buddhists generally. They commenced attaining the normal status of Bhiksus through the performance of some sacraments, (Intro. pp.19.7, quoting Tatakara Guptas' Adikarmaracana 149, pp. 1207-1208). They officiated at the religious ceremonies but at the same time, in addition to their profession of priesthood, earned their livelihood through such avocations as those of a mason, painter, sculptor, goldsmith, and carpenter. These artisan priests who were in later times larger in numbers than the Bhiksus proper became the religious guides of the people. Their avocations left them little time and desire for the acquisition of learning, for deep thinking, or for devotion to Dhyana and other spiritual exercises. They could not be expected to raise the declining Buddhism to a higher position through their endeavours nor could they check its course towards its ruin through the introduction of salutary reforms."

It is obvious that this new Buddhist priesthood had neither dignity nor learning and were a poor match for the rival, the Brahmins whose cunning was not unequal to their learning.[10]

The reason why Brahmanism rose from the ashes and Buddhism did not, is to be accounted for, not by any inherent superiority of Brahmanism over Buddhism. It is to be found in the peculiar character of their priesthood. Buddhism died because its army of priests died and it was not possible to create. Though beaten Brahmanism was never completely broken. Every Brahmin alive became priest and took the place of every Brahmin priest who died.

As to the conversion to the faith of Islam by the Buddhist population as a cause of the fall of Buddhism, there can hardly be much doubt.

In his Presidential address to the early Medieval and Rajput section of the Indian History Congress held at Allahabad in 1938. Prof. Surendra Nath Sen very rightly observed that there were two problems relating to the Medieval History of India for which no satisfactory answers were forthcoming as yet. He mentioned two: one connected with the origin of the Rajputs and the other to the distribution of the Muslim population in India. Referring to the second, he said:[11]

> "But I may be permitted to deal with one question that is not wholly of antiquarian interest today., The distribution of Muslim population in India demands some explanation. It is commonly believed that Islam followed the route of conquest and the subjugated people were forced to accept the faith of their rulers. The predominance of the Muslims in the Frontier Province and the Punjab lends some colour to this contention. But this theory cannot explain an overwhelming Muslim majority in Eastern Bengal. It is quite likely that the North-Western Frontier Province was peopled by Turkish folks during the Kushan days, and their easy conversion to Islam may be explained by racial affinity with the new conquerors; but the Muslims of Eastern Bengal are certainly not racially akin to the Turks and the Afghans, and the conversion of the Hindus of that region must have been due to other reasons."

What are these other reasons? Prof. Sen then proceeds to lay bare these reasons which are found in Muslim Chronicles. He takes the case of Sind for which there is direct testimony and says:[12]

> "According to the Chachnama, the Buddhists of Sind suffered all sorts of indignities and humiliations under their Brahman rulers, and when the Arabs invaded their country, the Buddhists lent their whole hearted support to them. Later on, when Dahir was slain and a Muslim Government was firmly established in his country, the Buddhists found to their dismay that so far as their rights and privileges were concerned, the Arabs were prepared to restore status quo ante bellum and even under the new order the Hindus received a preferential treatment. The only way out of this difficulty was to accept Islam because the converts were entitled to all the privileges reserved for the ruling classes. So the Buddhists of Sind joined the Muslim fold in large numbers".

Prof. Sen then adds this significant passage:

> "It cannot be an accident that the Punjab, Kashmir, the district around Behar Sharif, North-East Bengal where Muslims now predominate, were all strong Buddhist Centres in the pre-Muslim days. It will not be fair to suggest that the Buddhists succumbed more easily to political temptations than the Hindus and the change of religion was due to the prospects of the improvement of their political status."

Unfortunately the causes that have forced the Buddhist population of India to abandon Buddhism in favour of Islam have not been investigated and it is therefore impossible to say how far the persecution of the Brahmanic Kings was responsible for the result. But there are not wanting indications which suggest that this was the principal cause. We have positive evidence of two Kings engaged in the campaign of persecuting the Buddhist population.

The first to be mentioned is Mihirkula. He belonged to the Huns who invaded India about 455 A.D. and established their kingdom in Northern India with Sakala, the modern Sialkot in the Punjab as the capital. Mihirkula ruled about 528 A.D. As Vincent Smith says:[13]

> "All Indian traditions agree in representing Mihirkula as a blood thirsty tyrant. 'The Attila of India', stained to a

more than ordinary degree with 'implicable cruelty' noted by historians as characteristic of the Hun temperament"

Mihirkula, to use the language of Smith[14]:- exhibited ferocious hostility against the peaceful Buddhist cult, and remorselessly overthrew the *stupas* and monasteries, which he plundered of their treasures".

The other is Sasanka, the king of Eastern India. He ruled about the first decade of the seventh century and was defeated in a conflict with Harsha. In the words of Vincent Smith[15]

"Sansanka, who has been mentioned as the treacherous murderer of Harsha's brother, and probably was a scion of the Gupta dynasty, was a worshipper of Shiva, hating Buddhism, which he did his best to extirpate. He dug up and burnt the holly Bodhi tree at Buddha Gaya, on which, according to legend, Asoka had lavished inordinate devotion, broke the stone marked with the footprints of Buddha at Pataliputra; destroyed the convents, scattered the monks, carrying his persecutions to the foot of the Nepalese hills."

The seventh century seems to be a century of religious persecution in India. As Smith points out:[16]

"A terrible persecution of the cognate religion Jainism occured in Southern India in the seventh century".

Coming nearer to the time of the Muslim invasions, we have the instance of Sindh where persecution was undoubtedly the cause. That these persecutions continued upto the time of the Muslim invasions may be presumed by the fact that in Northern India the Kings were either Brahmins or Rajputs, both of whom were anti-Buddhists. That the Jains were persecuted even in the 12th century is amply supported by history. Smith refers to Ajayadeva, a Saiva King of Gujarat who came to the throne in A.D. 1174-76 and began his reign by a merciless persecution of the Jains, torturing their leader to death, Smith adds, "Several other well-established instances of severe persecution might be cited."

There is therefore nothing to vitiate the conclusion that the fall of Buddhism was due to the Buddhist becoming coverts to Islam as a way of escaping the tyranny of Brahmanism. The

evidence, if it does not support the conclusion, at least makes it probable. If it has been a disaster, it is a disaster for which Brahmanism must thank itself.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Modern researches go to show that Buddhism had spread over Europe and that the Celts in Britain were Buddhist. See "Buddhism in pre-Christian Britain" by Donald. A. Mackenzie.
2. Early History of India (1924) pages.
3. Nothing remains of Kanauj. It was completely destroyed by Mohammad although it was most gallantly defended by Prithviraj.
4. History of Medieval Hindu India Vol. II. p. 142.
5. Ibid Vol. III. Chap. X.
6. Early History of India (1924) pp. 419-420
7. Indian Antiquary 1874, p. 132 quoted by Max Muller, Hibbert Lectures (1878) pp. 162-164.
8. (The Bhikshukas under Brahmanism) are further subdivided into (1) Vaidikas (2) Yajniks (3) Srotriyas and (4) Agnihotris. Vaidikas are those who learn the Vedas by heart and repeat them without a mistake. Yajnikas are those who perform Yajnas and other religious rites and ceremonies. Srortiyas are those who specialize in the art of performing great sacrifices. Agnihotries are those who maintain the three sacrificial fires and perform the issues (fortnightly sacrifices) and Chaturmasyas, sacrifices to be performed every four months).
9. Summary of his views by Narendra Nath Law in Harprasad Shastri Memorial Volume pp. 363-364.
10. "The reason why the new Buddhist priests could not leave their avocations and devote themselves wholly to the propagation of religion is because as Harparsad Shastri points out. "The decrease in the number of Buddhist laity also resulted in the difficulty of Buddhist monks to receive alms. As the monk could not take alms from more than three house holders and could not visit the same household within a month for the same purpose, ninety household are necessary to maintain a monk." Harprasad Shastri Memorial Vol. p. 362.
11. Early career of Kanhoji Angria and other papers pp. 188-89
12. Ibid., pp. 188-89
13. Early History of India (1924) p. 336.
14. Ibid., p. 337.
15. Ibid., p. 360.
16. Ibid F.N. p. 214.

APPENDIX

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE HINDU WOMAN

(Who Was Responsible For It?)*

I

"In the journal of the Maha Bodhi for March, 1950 there appeared an article on "The Position of Women in Hinduism and Buddhism" by Lama Govinda. His article was a rejoinder to an article which had appeared in Eve's Weekly of January 21, 1950 and in which the Buddha was charged as being the man whose teachings were mainly responsible for the downfall of women in India. Lama Govinda did his duty as every Buddhist must in coming forward to refute the charge. But the matter cannot be allowed to rest there. This is not the first time such a charge is made against the Buddha, It is often made by interested parties who cannot bear his greatness and comes from quarters weightier in authority than the writer in Eve's Weekly can claim. It is therefore necessary to go to the root of the matter and examine the very foundation of this oft repeated charge. The charge is so grave and so vile that the readers of the Maha Bodhi will, I am sure, welcome further examination of it.

Such a charge against the Buddha can be supported on two grounds only:-

The first possible ground may be the reply which the Buddha is reported (in Chapter V—Mahaparinibbana Sutta) to have given to a question put to him by Ananda. It reads as follows:

"9. How are we to conduct ourselves, (asked Ananda) with regard to womankind? As not seeing them,

* *The Maha Bodhi,* Calcutta,Vol. May-June, 1952, pp.137-151.

Ananda. But if we should see them, what are we to do? Not talking, Ananda. But if they should speak to us, Lord, what are we to do? Keep wide awake, Ananda."

There is no denying that the passage in question is to be found in the text of the Mahaparinibbana Sutta as published by the Oxford University Press. The point however is not whether the passage exists or not. The point is that if any argument is to be built upon this passage, is it not necessary to prove that the text is original and genuine and not a latter interpolation by the Bhikkhus?

Any one who knows the central teachings of the Buddha is quite bewildered after reading the Sutta Pitaka as we find it now wrapped about by the mythical drapery, disfigured by additions of purely Brahmanic ideas entirely foreign to the original Buddhist thought and distorted by the twists and turns given to it by monastic ideas intended to enforce monastic ideals. So much so that one is inclined to join in wonder with Rhys Davids[1] and ask:-

"Where in these pages (of the Sutta Pitaka) is Gotama? How much of them, how little, is a blend of (it may be) original sayings clearly or confusedly reproduced, of fillings by ages of successive narrators, of memory-schemes drawn up by teachers, not teachers of the multitude but of orally learning pupils, of efforts, often clumsy, by editors to set down in writing much that had long been more fluently told? And all of them, narrators, teachers, editors, were men whose choice of ideals of life differed from that of the rest of the world, differed the more in proportion as they were sincerely not of the world as well as not in it. Through this distorting medium he has to read, and ask himself which saying, put into the mouth of a certain accredited 'teacher and way-shower' of truth, are likely to have come from such a man as he is recorded to have been?"

There is therefore nothing very extravagant in the suggestion that this passage is a later interpolation by the Bhikkhus. In the first place the Sutta Pitaka was not reduced to writing till 400 years had passed after the death of the Buddha. Secondly, the Editors who compiled and edited them were Monks and the Monk Editors compiled and wrote for the

Monk. The statement attributed to the Buddha is valuable for a Monk to preserve his rule of celibacy and it is not unlikely for the Monk Editor to interpolate such a rule.

There are two other considerations which go to support the suggestion that this passage is a later interpolation.

(1) Firstly from the Table given in the introduction to this Sutta (to be found on page 72 of the Digha Nikaya, Part II in the S.B.B. Series, by the Davids) it will be noticed that great many of the passages which occur in this Sutta also occur in other Suttas. It is important to note that this passage does not occur in any other Sutta notwithstanding the fact that they contain so many other passages from this Sutta.

(2) Secondly from page XXXVIII of the introduction to this Sutta (published in Vol. XI of the S.B.E. by the Davids) it appears that there exists a Chinese version of this Sutta. But this Chinese text also does not contain this particular passage.

Let us go further and apply the test of probability. Was there any reason why Ananda should have asked such a question? Was it in keeping with the known relations of Buddha with women? There is evidence to show that such a question could not have been asked by Ananda and that, if such a question had been asked, the Buddha could not have given such a reply. The conduct of Ananda and of the Buddha towards women as reported in the Pitakas is so contrary to the possibility of such a question being raised and such an answer being given.

On the point as to whether there was any necessity for Ananda to ask such a question, it is relevant to note that in the same Chapter of the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, only in a few gathas removed from those quoted above, the Buddha describes how sweet was Ananda and how he was loved by all. Out of them I quote below the following two gathas—

"16. Brethren, there are these four wonderful and marvellous qualities in Ananda.

If, brethren, a number of the brethren of the Order should come to visit Ananda, they are filled with joy on beholding him; and if Ananda should then preach the truth to them, they are filled with joy at the discourse; while the company of brethren is ill at ease, brethren, when Ananda is silent.

If brethren, a number of the sisters of the Order..... or of devout men,..... or of devout women, should behold him; and if Ananda should then preach the truth to them, they are filled with joy at the discourse; while the company of sisters is ill at ease, brethren, when Ananda is silent.

From this it is clear that it was usual for Ananda to meet women, not only sisters but devout women who were not members of the Order. He used to see them, meet them and talk to them. Why then should Ananda have asked such a question? The Buddha knew that the women used to meet Ananda. He raised no objection before. Why should he have thought of interdicting and forbidding all contact with women? The whole passage is so unnatural that it must be regarded as a later monastic interpolation.

There is another instance in the life of Ananda which stands in stark contrast with the passage in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta. As is well known, in the first Sangiti (Council) five complaints were made against Ananda.

They were:-

(1) That he failed to ask which parts of the Vinaya were in the opinion of the Buddha the lesser parts for which he gave authority to the Sangha to alter and amend.
(2) that he stepped on the Robe of the Lord during retreat when sewing it.
(3) that he caused the body of the departed Lord to be saluted first by women so that it was soiled by their tears.
(4) that he did not ask the Lord to live for a cycle, and
(5) that he was principally instrumental in getting women admitted to the Sangha.

To all these charges Ananda pleaded guilty. Whether he should have pleaded guilty or not is another matter. What is of

interest is the third charge. For it has great relevance to the issue in question. Why did Ananda allow women to touch the body of the Master, if the advice given by him as mentioned in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, is true as a fact? Would he so flagrantly and knowingly disobey the advice given by the Buddha a few minutes before? The answer must be in the negative. What follows from this negative answer? What follows is that the Buddha had not given such an advice as is alleged against him. For if he had given such an advice Ananda could not have acted contrary to it. It therefore stands to reason that no such advice had been given by the Buddha.

Let us now consider the question from the side of the Buddha. Would it have been natural for the Buddha to give such a reply? The answer to this question must depend upon Buddha's course of conduct towards women. Did the Buddha avoid meeting women as is suggested by the advice he is reported to have given to Ananda? Where are the facts?

Two examples at once come to mind. One is that of Visakha. She was one of the eighty chief disciples of the Buddha with the title of 'Chief of Alms-givers'. Did not Visakha at one time go to hear Buddha preach? Did she not enter his monastery? Did the Buddha act towards Visakha in the manner he directed Ananda to act towards women? What did the Bhikkhus present at the meeting do? Did they leave the meeting?

The second instance that comes to one's mind is that of Amrapali of Vesali. She went to see the Buddha and gave him and his monks an invitation for a meal at her house. She was a courtesan. She was the most beautiful woman in Vesali. Did the Buddha and the Bhikkhus avoid her? On the other hand they accepted her invitation—rejecting the invitation of the Licchavis who felt quite insulted on that account—and went to her home and partook of her food.

Other examples are not wanting. The Nandakovada Sutta[2] tells of Mahaprajapati Gotami having brought five hundred alms women with her to the Buddha when he was staying at Sravasti with a request that he should instruct them in the Doctrine and Discipline. Did the Buddha run away from them?

The Samyutta Nikaya[3] reports that Kokananda, daughter of Pajjuna, when the night was far spent, shedding radiance with her effulgent beauty over the whole Mahavana, came into the presence of the Buddha when he was staying at Vesali.

The reports of frequent visits of Queen Mallika, wife of King Pasenajit, to the Buddha for religious instructions are scattered in the Pitakas.

From these instances it is clear that the Buddha did not shun women and women were not afraid of going to the Buddha.

It is true that the Buddha did advise[4] the Bhikkhus not to make it a habit to visit families of lay disciples for fear of human weakness yielding to frequent contacts with women. But he did not forbid such visits nor did he express any disdain about women as such.

It is also true that the Buddha was dreadfully keen in maintaining celibacy. He was painfully aware of the fact that, to use his own words[5] "Women doth stain life of celibacy". But what did he advise? Did he advise the Bhikkhus to shun all contact with women? Not at all. He never put any such interdict. Far from doing any such thing what he did was to tell the Bhikkhus that whenever they met any woman, do ye call up the mother-mind the sister-mind, or the daughter-mind[6] as the case may be i.e., regard a woman as you would your own mother, sister or daughter.

The second possible ground which an opponent of the Buddha can rely upon in support of the accusation is the opposition of the Buddha to women joining the Sangha and in making the Bhikkhuni Sangha (when he ultimately allowed it) subordinate to the Bhikkhu Sangha. Here again a further analysis of the situation is necessary. Why did the Buddha oppose the demand of Mahaprajapati to take parivraja (ordination)? Did he oppose it because he was of opinion that women were a low class whose admission would lower the status of the Sangha in public esteem? Or did he oppose it because he was of opinion that women intellectually and morally were incapable of realizing the ideal of his Doctrine and his Discipline? The second of these two questions was definitely put to the Buddha by Ananda in the course of the argument

when he found the Buddha somewhat adamant. The Buddha gave an unequivocal answer leaving no room for doubt or dispute. He said that women were fully capable of realizing his Doctrine and his Discipline and that was not the reason why he refused their demand for taking parivraja. It is clear from this that the Buddha did not regard woman as inferior to man either in point of intellect or character. That he opposed the admission of women because he held them in low esteem and feared that they might lower the prestige of the Sangha—is an argument which is hardly worth mentioning. For if that was his feeling he would never have admitted them at all.

To the argument that he made the Bhikkhuni Sangha subordinate to the Bhikkhu Sangha, the answer is question. Behind this arrangement there was no consideration as to superiority or inferiority. What lay behind this arrangement were considerations of purely practical character. In admitting women to be Parivrajikas (nuns) the Buddha had to face two questions. Should there be only one Sangha for men and women? He decided to have two separate Sanghas. He was afraid that in a confraternity of men and women Parivrajakas, the rule of celibacy would be completely lost. While therefore admitting women he thought it was necessary to use his own words, a dyke between them by creating two separate organisations. Having decided to create two separate organisations he was faced with another question. If there are to be two separate Sanghas—one for men and one for women—were they to be quite independent and separate organisations or was there to be some sort of inter-relation between the two?

On the first issue no other decision was possible except that the woman's Sangha should be separate from the men's Sangha. This was an inevitable consequence which followed from the Rule of celibacy which was binding on both. The Buddha knew what a great force the sex instinct is with life of both man as well woman. To use the Buddha's own words, it is this instinct which drives a man in woman's bondage and a woman in man's bondage. This force, if given an opportunity to have its full force, the rule of celibacy could not last for a minute. To save the rule of celibacy he had to organise two separate Sanghas.

To take up the second issue: was any decision possible other than the one the Buddha took? The women who joined his faith were raw women. They had to be instructed in his doctrine and they had to be trained in his rules of discipline. Who could undertake this task? To whom else could he have entrusted this work? To none except the male Bhikkhus of his Order. For they were already instructed in his doctrine and trained in his discipline. And this is what he did. Now what was the relationship that was forged between the Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis by entrusting the work of instruction of the latter to the former? This is a necessary question to raise. Without it the explanation of the insubordination of the Bhukkhuni Sangha to the Bhikkhu Sangha does not become quite clear. The obvious answer to this question is that by entrusting the work of training the Bhikkhunis to the Bhikkhus their relationship became one of teacher and pupil. Now does not the relationship of teacher and pupil involve some authority for teacher over the pupil and some submission or subordination on the part of the pupil to the Teacher? What more did the Buddha do?

In this connection it is useful to compare the relationship between monasteries and nunneries in the Christian Church. Are not the nunneries subordinate to the monasteries? Of course they are.[7] Can anybody therefore say that Christianity treats women as inferior to men? Why then should a different interpretation be put upon the arrangement made by the Buddha for regulating the relations between the Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis?

So far as the Sutta Pitaka is concerned there is absolutely no ground for the charge that the Buddha had a prejudice against women and was for ever exhorting men to beware of them.

II

Let us pass from particular instances to the general attitude of the Buddha towards women in general. Did the Buddha hold women in low esteem? I am sure that whoever reads references to women by the Buddha which occur in the sacred literature of the Buddhists will be convinced that far from

doing anything which would have the effect of degrading the women, the Buddha all along tried to ennoble woman and to elevate her. Let me give a few illustrations in support of this view.

The birth of a daughter has been from ancient past regarded as a calamity by the people of India generally. Did the Buddha share this sentiment? His attitude towards this question was quite the contrary to the traditional view as is illustrated by his advice to king Prasenajit. Once king Prasenajit was visiting the Buddha at Sravasti in Jeta's garden. A messenger from the Royal Palace came and informed him that his wife Queen Mallika had given birth to a daughter. On hearing this news the King went off his colour and looked sad and dejected. The Buddha noticed this change on his face and asked him for the cause of it. On being informed of it the Buddha said[8]—"Why be sorry, a woman child, O Lord of men, may prove even a better offspring than a male. For she may grow up wise and virtuous.... The boy that she may bear may do great deeds and rule great realms...."

In answer to a question as to why some families rise and others decay, the Buddha is reported to have told the Bhikkhus that[9]—

"Whatsoever families, monks, having attained greatness of possessions, fail to last long, because they see not for what is lost, they repair not the decayed, they eat and drink to excess, they put in authority a woman or a man that is immoral. Whatsoever families..... fail to last long, all of them do so because of these four reasons or one or other of them.

"Whatsoever families, monks, do last long, all of them do so because they seek for what is lost, repair the decayed, eat and drink in the moderation, and put in authority a virtuous woman or man. Whatsoever families .... do last long, all of them do so because of these four reasons or one or other of them."

In describing to the Bhikkhus what happens when a Monarch "who rolls the wheel, i.e., who is destined to be a Chakravarti (world monarch) appears in the world the Buddha is reported to have told the monks that[10]

"Whenever such a monarch appears there is the appearance of the seven treasures; the treasure of the Wheel, the Elephant, the Horse, the Jewel, the Woman, the House-father, and the treasure of the Heir Apparent".

On another occasion the Buddha, speaking of the value of a woman to the world, said[11]—

"Woman is the commodity Supreme because (as the commentator adds) she is of indispensable utility, or because through her Bodhisattvas and world rulers take birth".

How can a person in whose view the birth of a daughter was not an occasion for sorrow and might well be an occasion of joy, who held the view that those families are saved from a downfall which place a woman in authority over their affairs, who had no hesitation in describing woman as one of the seven Treasures and a thing of supreme value, be described as a hater or despiser of woman? These statements are typical of the general sentiments entertained by the Buddha towards woman kind. Can anybody say that they are calculated to bring the woman into ridicule and contempt?

III

Those who see a social wrong in the Buddha placing the Bhikkhunis under the authority of the Bhikkhus do not realize what a revolutionary act it was on the part of the Buddha to have allowed women to take Sannyas or Parivaraja (monkhood). Under the Brahmanic theory women had already been denied the right to acquire knowledge. When the question of Sannyas came they did to the Indian woman another wrong. As a matter of history Sannyas was not an ideal of the Brahmins who worshipped the Vedas and who, for a long time, refused to recognize the Upanishadas as sacred literature. Sannyas was the ideal of the Upanishads and the end of Sannyasa was to realize the Upanishadic doctrine that the Atman is Brahma. The Brahmins were dead opposed to the life of Sannyas. Ultimately they yielded but subject to certain conditions. One of the conditions was that women (and Shudras) were not to be eligible for Sannyas.

It is important to understand the reason why the Brahmins debarred women from taking Sannyas because it helps to understand the attitude of the Brahmins towards woman which was in sharp contrast with that of the Buddha. The reason is stated by Manu. It reads as follows:

> IX. 18. Women have no right to study the Vedas. That is why their Sanskars (rites) are performed without Veda Mantras. Women have no knowledge of religion because they have no right to know the Vedas. The uttering of the Veda Mantras is useful for removing sin. As women cannot utter the Veda mantras they are as untruth is.

Although Manu was later than the Buddha, he has enunciated the old view propounded in the older Dharma Sutras. This view of the woman was both an insult and an injury to the woman of India. It was a injury because without any justification she was denied the right to acquire knowledge which is the birth right of every human being. It was an insult because after denying her opportunity to acquire knowledge she was declared to be as unclean as untruth for want of knowledge and therefore not to be allowed to take Sannyas which was regarded as a path to reach Brahma. Not only was she denied the right to realize her spiritual potentiality, she was declared to be barren of any spiritual potentiality by the Brahmins.

This is a cruel deal with women. It has no parallel. As Prof. Max Muller[12] has said, "However far the human may be from the Divine, nothing on earth is nearer to God than man, nothing on the earth more godlike than man." If this is true of man why is this not true of woman? The Brahmins had no answer.

By admitting women to the life of Parivrajika, the Buddha, by one stroke, removed both these wrongs. He gave them the right to knowledge and the right to realize their spiritual pontentialities along with man. It was both a revolution and liberation of women in India. To quote the words of Prof. Max Muller:

"The history of India teaches us that the galling fetters of the old Brahmanic law were broken at last, for there can be

little doubt that we have to recognize in Buddhism an assertion of the rights of individual's liberty, and more particularly of the right of rising above the trammels of society, of going, as it were, into the forest, and of living a life of perfect spiritual freedom, whenever a desire for such freedom arose."

This freedom which the Buddha gave to the women of India is a fact of far greater importance and outweighs whatever stigma which is said to be involved in the subordination of the Bhikkhunis to the Bhikkhu Sangha. This was not an empty freedom. It was freedom which they keenly enjoyed and sang about. "O free indeed! O gloriously free am I...." sang Mutta[13]—a Bhikkhuni, who was a Brahmin girl. Metika, another Bhikkhuni, also a Brahmin girl, sang—"..... so sit I here upon a rock. And over my spirit sweeps the breath of liberty."[14] As Mrs. Rhys Davids Says"[15]

"To gain this freedom, mobility.... they, like their later Christian sisters, had laid down all social position, all domestic success; they had lost their world. But in exchange they had won the status of an individual in place of being adjuncts, however much admired, fostered, and sheltered they might, as such, have been. "With shaven head, wrapt in their 'robe'—a dress indistinguishable, it would seem, from the swathing toga and, swathed undergarments of the male religious—the Sister was free to come and go to dive along into the depths of the wood, or climb aloft."

In allowing women to become Bhikkhunis, the Buddha not only opened for them the way to liberty, he also allowed them to acquire dignity independent of sex. To her freedom she could in the words of Mrs. Rhys Davids:

"Wed the other austere joy of being recognized, at least by her brother 'Arahants', as a rational being, without reference to sex. As such she breathed the spiritual atmosphere, she shared the intellectual communion of that religious aristocracy called in the Pitakas, Ariyas, with whom she claimed that power of 'seeing all things as they really are' which the Buddhist called being Awake.

"How should the woman's nature hinder us as Ariyas?" says Soma, a Bhikkhuni.[16]

'What can that signify to one in whom
Insight doth truly comprehend the Norm?
To one for whom the question doth arise:
Am I a woman in such matters, or
Am I a man? or what not am I, then?
To such an one is Mara fit to talk!'

This is not all. The Buddha in allowing women to become Bhikkhunis opened them the way to equality with man. As observed by Mrs. Rhys Davids[17] "It is true that the Bhikkhunis were, technically, appointed juniors in perpetuity to the Bhikkus. It is equally clear that, by intellectual and more eminence, a Theri might claim equality with the highesat of the fraternity. In the Psalms an instance occurs, in xxxvii, where Bhadda associates herself in spiritual attainment with the great Kassapa, successor, as head of the Order, to the Founder himself. In this connection it should be noted that the Buddha did not place any premium on virginity as such. He kept his way open to all classes of women, married, unmarried, widows, and even to prostitutes. All could acquire merit, freedom, dignity and equality along with men."

IV

There can be no doubt that there has been an utter downfall in position of women in India from what it once was. One cannot say much about the part they played in ancient time in statecraft. But there is no doubt that they did occupy a very high position in the intellectual and social life of the country.

That at one time a woman was entitled to upanayan is clear from the Atharva Veda where a girl is spoken of as being eligible for marriage having finished her Brahmacharya. From the Shrauta Sutras it is clear that women could repeat the Mantras of the Vedas and that women were taught to read the Vedas. Panini's Ashtadhyayi bears testimony to the fact that women attended Gurukul College and studied the various Shakhas (Sections) of the Veda and became expert in Mimansa. Patanijali's Maha Bhashya shows that women were teachers and taught Vedas to girl students. The stories of women entering into public discussions with men on most abstruse subjects of religion, philosophy and metaphysics are by no

means few. The story of public disputation between Janaka and Sulabha, between Yajnavalkya and Gargi, between Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi and between Sankaracharya and Vidyadhari shows that Indian women in pre-Manu's time could rise to the highest pinnacle of learning and education.

That at one time women were highly respected cannot be disputed. Among the Ratnis who played so prominent a part in the coronation of the King in Ancient India was Queen and the King made her an offering[18] as he did to the others. Not only the King elect did homage to the Queen he worshipped his other wives of lower castes.[19] In the same way the King offers salutation after the coronation ceremony to the ladies of the chiefs of the Srenies (guilds).[20]

This is very high position for a woman in any part of the world. Who was responsible for their fall? It was Manu, the Law Giver of the Hindus. There can be no other answer. To leave no room for doubt, let me quote some of the laws made by Manu regarding women and are to be found in the Manu-Smriti.

II. 213. It is the nature of women to seduce man in this (world). For that reason the wise are never unguarded in (the company of) females.

II. 214. For women are able to lead astray in this world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and (to make) him a slave of desire and anger.

II. 215. One should not sit in a lonely place with one's mother, sister or daughter; for the senses are powerful, and master even a learned man.

IX. 14. Women do not care for beauty, nor is their attention fixed on age; (thinking), '(It is enough that) he is a man', they give themselves to the handsome and to the ugly.

IX. 15. Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however, carefully they may be guarded in this (world).

IX. 16. Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation to be such, (every) man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them.

IX. 17. (When creating them) Manu allotted to women (a love of their) seat and (of) ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct.

This shows how low was woman in the opinion of Manu. The laws of Manu against women are of a piece with this view.

Women are not to be free under any circumstances. In the opinion of Manu:

IX. 2. Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males (of) their (families), and if they attach themselves to sensual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control.

IX. 3. Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age; a woman is never for independence.

IX. 5. Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling (they may appear); if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families.

IX. 6. Considering that the highest duty of all castes, even weak husbands (must) strive to guard their wives.

V. 147. By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.

V. 148. In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons: a woman must never be independent.

V. 149. She must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both (her own and her husband's) families contemptible.

IX. 45. The husband is declared to be one with wife, which means that there could be no separation once a woman is married.

Many Hindus stop here as though this is the whole story regarding Manu's law of divorce and keep on idolizing it by comforting their conscience with the thought that Manu regarded marriage as sacrament and therefore did not allow divorce. This of course is far from the truth. His law against divorce had a very different motive. It was not to tie up a man to a woman but it was to tie up the woman to a man and to leave the man free.

For Manu does not prevent a man from giving up his wife. Indeed he not only allows him to abandon his wife but he also permits him to sell her. But what he does is to prevent the wife from becoming free. See what Manu says:

IX. 46. Neither by sale nor by repudiation is a wife released from her husband.

The meaning is that a wife, sold or repudiated by her husband can never become the legitimate wife of another who may have bought or received her after she was repudiated. If this is not monstrous, nothing can be. But Manu was not worried by considerations of justice or injustice in framing his law. He wanted to deprive women of the freedom they had under the Buddhistic regime. Manu was outraged by licence and in putting a stop to it he deprived her of her liberty.

A wife was reduced by Manu to a level of a slave in the matter of property.

IX. 416.A wife, a son, and a slave, these three are declared to have no property; the wealth which they earn is (acquired) for him to whom they belong.

When she becomes a widow, Manu allows her maintenance, if her husband was joint, and a widow's estate in the property of her husband, if he was separate from his family. But Manu never allows her to have any domination over property.

A woman under the laws of Manu is subject to corporal punishment and Manu allows the husband the right to beat his wife.

VIII. 209. A wife, a son, a slave a pupil, and a younger brother of the full blood, who have committed faults, may be beaten with a rope or a split bamboo.

Under Manu a woman had no right to knowledge. The study of the Veda was forbidden to her by Manu.

II. 66. Even for a woman the performance of the *Sanskaras* are necessary and they should be performed without uttering the Veda mantras.

Offering sacrifices according to Brahmanism formed the very soul of religion. Manu forbids woman from performing sacrifices. Manu ordains that:

XI. 36-37. A woman shall not perform the daily sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas. If she does it she will go to hell.

To disable her from performing such sacrifices Manu prevents her from getting the aid and services of a Brahmin priest.

IV. 205-206. A Brahmin must never eat food given at a sacrifice performed by women. Sacrifices performed by women are inauspicious and not acceptable to God. They should therefore be avoided.

Finally a word regarding the ideal of life, Manu has sought to place before a woman. It had better be stated in his own words:

V. 151.Him to whom her father may give her, or her brother with the father's permission, she shall obey as long as he lives and when he is dead, she must not insult his memory.

V. 154.Though destitute of virtue, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a God by a faithful wife.

V. 155.No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by women, apart from their husbands; if a wife obeys her husband, she will for that reason alone be exalted in heaven.

Then comes the choicest texts which form the path and the marrow of this ideal which Manu prescribes for women:

V. 153. The husband who wedded her with sacred mantras, is always a source of happiness to his wife, both in season and out of season, this world and in the next:

V. 150. She must always be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, careful in cleaning her utensils, and economical in expenditure.

This the Hindu regard as a very lofty ideal for a woman!!!

As though to put a coping stone on his edifice of disabilities of women, Manu declared a new rule that killing a woman was only an Upapataka i.e. it was a minor offence.

XI. 67. Liquor, slaying women, Shudras, Vaishyas, or Kshatriyas, and Atheists (are all) minor offences.

One can quite understand why Manu should have said that the killing of a Sudra, Vaishya or a Kshatriya was only an Upapataka. He was trying to establish that the Brahmin was superior to all these and only the killing of a Brahmin was Mahapataka. But why did he apply the same rule to women? Only because a woman, in the eyes of Manu, was a thing of no value.

In the face of of these quotations can anybody doubt that it was Manu who was responsible for the degradation of women in India? Most people are perhaps aware of this. But they do not seem to know two things. They do not know what is peculiar in Manu. There is nothing new or startling in the Laws of Manu about woman. They are the views of the Brahmins ever since Brahmanism was born in India. Before Manu they existed only as a social theory. What Manu did was to convert what was a social theory into the law of the state. The second thing they do not know is the reason which led Manu to impose these disabilities upon women. Sudras and women were the two chief sections of the Aryan Society which were flocking to join the religion of the Buddha and thereby undermining the foundation of Brahmanic Religion. Manu wanted to stem the tide of women flowing in direction of Buddhism.

It is for this that Manu imposed these disabilities upon women and crippled them permanently. Those who doubt this might well consider the following injunctions contained in Manu Smriti:

V. 88. Funeral rites and obsequies which are performed on the death of a person shall be withdrawn (i.e. shall not be performed) from those who are born out of intermixture, from those who are addicted to asceticism and from those who have ended their lives by commiting suicide.

V. 89. They shall also be withdrawn from women who have joined a heretic sect, who behave too freely, who have injured a child in their womb or their husband and those who drink wine.

This injunction is among others aimed at (1) those who are addicted to asceticism and (2) women who have joined a heretic sect. In this injunction asceticism refers to Parivrajikas i.e. those who have abandoned their homes and taken to Sannyas and, in referring to a heretic sect, there is no doubt that Manu has in mind the Buddhist religion. It is therefore clear that when Manu declares that no funeral rites and obsequies shall be performed, for an ascetic or a woman who has joined a heretic sect, what Manu does it to prohibit performance of funeral rites and obsequies of a member of a family-whether male or female who has joined the Buddha's religion. In other words he wants them to be treated as though they were disaffiliated and no longer belonged to the family. Manu was the greatest opponent of the Buddhist religion. This is the secret of the many inequities which he heaped upon women. For he knew that if the home is to be protected against the invasion of Buddhism it is the women who must be put under restrain. And he did it. All responsibility for the decline and fall of woman in India must be fastened upon Manu and not upon the Buddha.

In the compass of a few pages I have endeavoured to present the story of the Rise and Fall of the Hindu woman, I have also endeavoured to offer an explanation as to who was the author of their fall and why he brought it about. I hope that the unprejudiced and the impartial will realize that it was

not the Buddha who can be held responsible for the tragedy. If anything, the Buddha endeavoured to ennoble the woman, it was to raise her to the level of man.

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